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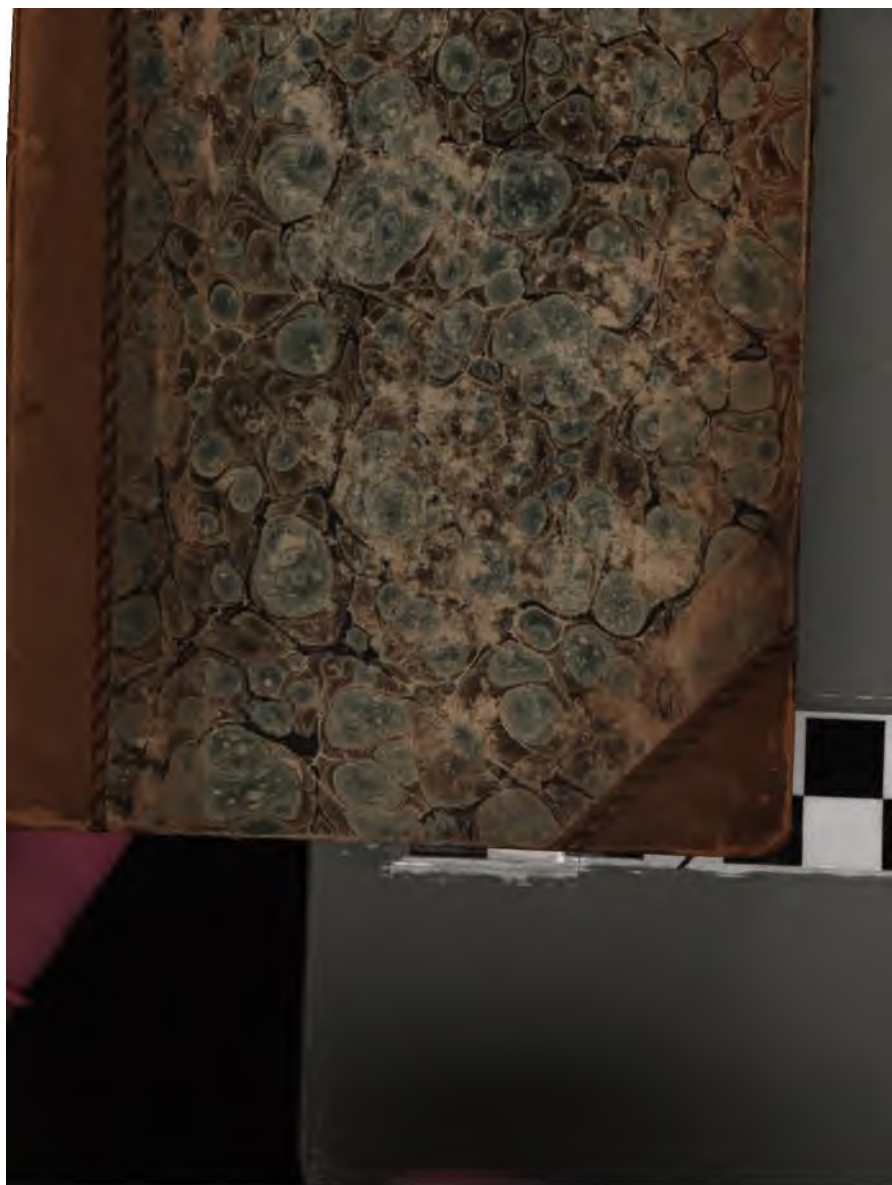
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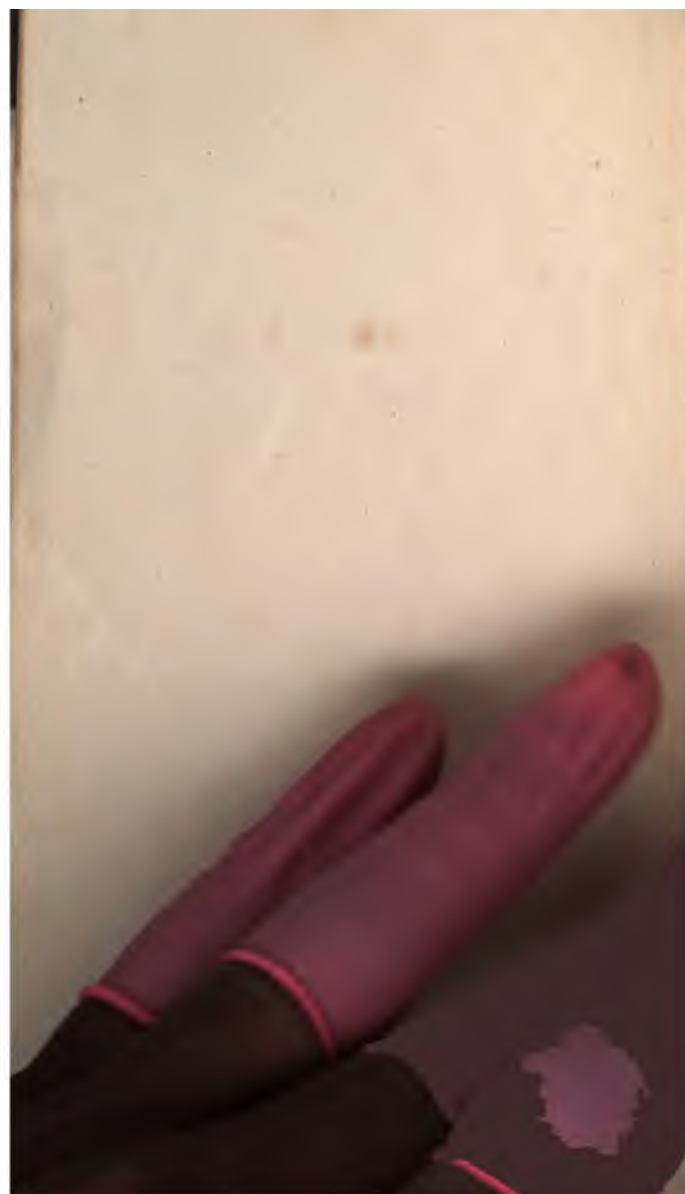
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THE PARSONAGE.

S. H. 1826

IS THIS RELIGION ?

OR,

A PAGE FROM THE BOOK OF THE
WORLD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

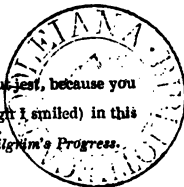
"MAY YOU LIKE IT."

Charles B. Taylor

Faithful. But I am ready to think you do but jest, because you
smiled.

Christian. God forbid that I should jest (though I smiled) in this
matter, or that I should accuse any falsely.

The Pilgrim's Progress.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN TAYLOR,
WATERLOO-PLACE, FLEET-MALL.

1826.

61.

64 .

LONDON:

PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

TO

MY OWN DEAREST ADINE,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME

IS DEDICATED

BY HER HUSBAND.



IS THIS RELIGION ?

CHAPTER I.

MARIA GRAHAM was born in a certain country town about fifty miles from London : her father was, what is called, "an eminent grocer." Maria had been much loved by her young companions while she was a child, for she had a fine flow of natural spirits, and was often the gayest among them. At an early age she was sent to a day-school in her native town, and was very happy when her mother allowed her to invite some of her young school-fellows to pass a long summer evening with her. The little girls used to drink tea in a large arbour at the end of the garden, which commanded a view only of Mr. Graham's bright red brick mansion and warehouses, with prim Mrs. Graham seated at one of the

lower windows, looking up with a smile from her work every now and then towards the little girls, or in other words watching them; but what cared they for the view, or what was a better view than the green sides of the harbour, and the large plum-cake, and their own merry faces? The happy children were allowed to take a walk as soon as tea was over; and when Mrs. Graham made her appearance in her bonnet and shawl, there was a general rush from the harbour, and the kind lady's voice was often raised above its usual pitch, with "Miss Robins, Sarah Robins, my dear, don't speak quite so loud!—It's not pretty to jump over a watering-pot, Miss Tod—Maria! Maria Graham, where are your feet? You know your papa would be in a fine fuss if he could see you walking so close to his cucumber frames!—Who has trod down this fine plant of London Pride?—Deary me, children! you quite weary me out!—Oh gracious! don't go so near the well!—I knew a little Miss, whose father lived in Tooley-street in the Borough, who was staying for a day with her aunt at Peckham Rye, and

she slipped away to the well before :—Dear ! Mercy on me ! where *are* they all gone ?” she cried, finding that her only auditor was one little mild girl. But while the good creature was describing how the little Miss had slipped away, her daughter and the wild troop had slipped away into the shop, and finding there only Mr. Bennet the foreman, and one customer, a little boy, they were dancing about, and jumping on the counters, and asking Mr. Bennet for plums and sugar-candy : nay, one had gone so far as to steal the pen from behind Mr. Bennet’s ear, when Mr. Graham himself appeared with his large grave face at the door, and put to flight the noisy troop in a moment.

When Maria Graham was twelve years of age, she was sent up to an expensive boarding-school near London, where she was taught to read and speak French and Italian ; and to draw large heads in chalks ; and to paint small skreens with flowers, which looked very smooth and very bright, but not at all like real flowers ; and to dance Scotch dances, and French dances, and Spanish dances, and

German dances; and to write long themes in very fine language; and to play favourite airs, with flourishing variations, on the harp and piano-forte: and to sing Italian bravuras.

At sixteen she left school, and came home to her parents as *finished*. They looked up to her as a superior being; and if so many accomplishments could have made her so, she was superior. She had good natural abilities, and had not learnt any thing as girls learn in general; she *did* speak French and Italian well, she drew, and danced, and played, and sung *very* well; but was she improved? Her former companions thought not, for she did not appear to have any clear recollection of them; and if she noticed them, her distant manner and slight bow were more provoking than decided rudeness. Her cousin, Luke Allan, sighed over the change as the rich, full melody of her voice, mingling with the accompaniment of her harp, reached his ear in the shop. He could not help feeling she had made but a poor exchange in giving up her own simple and natural ways for so many fine accomplishments. Even her parents

had at times a few misgivings at the bottom of their hearts, though they never allowed such thoughts a moment's growth, much less gave a hint to one another on the subject.

There was one, however, of Maria's own family, who neither sighed over, nor suspected the change, but who bluntly, and in the most downright language, said, "The girl is spoilt!" This person was Luke Allan's mother, an elderly widow, whose husband had been an honest baker. Mrs. Allan was a woman of strong mind, abounding in good common sense. She was apt to speak the truth, and the plain truth, at all times: some persons thought too often. She had read much, although in a few books; for she had turned her reading to account. Her only unmarried daughter, Bessy Allan, had been long the most intimate friend of her cousin; but something which Rachel felt to be coolness had discovered itself in Maria at times—only at times, for there were seasons when Maria was as familiar and communicative as ever.

"Well, sister," said Mr. Graham to Mrs.

Allan, a few evenings after Maria's return from school, "Maria has come home for good, and what do you think of her?"

Mrs. Allan had been drinking tea with the Grahams: and she was walking up and down the broad gravel walk in her brother's garden, with Mr. Graham at her side.

"Tell me your opinion, now," he said: "What do you think of her paintings, and her music, and her fine works of all sorts?"

"All very fine, I dare say, brother, though I'm not much of a judge! Now, to my mind, I set as much store by that large sampler which Maria turned out of the back parlour, framed and glazed as it was, than I do by all those gay pictures: Maria was the best marker, for a girl, I ever met with."

"Aye! that's very true, sister; and I was quite against sending away that sampler; for there was a time when I looked upon it with much pride: but then, to be sure, as my wife says, those drawings put the old day-school sampler to the blush. Maria," he added, after walking a few steps in silence, "has cost me a mort of money; but then she will

be an heiress, and I shall send her into the world with an education and a fortune fit for any lady in the land."

"O papa!" exclaimed a sweet and joyous voice, and broke off the solemn discussion, "do look at these books? Has not Harvey bound them well?—beautifully for a country bookbinder?"

"Very well, indeed," said the honest man, taking the volumes out of the white hands of his daughter, who had tripped up to him before he heard her approach. "And what books may these be? They are wonderously little, however."

"Guarini, dear papa!"

"What name did you say, child?" asked Mrs. Allan in her usual dry manner.

"Guarini, aunt—Il Pastor Fido! A charming book! I delight in it! You would like it so much! O you *should* read it! Let me see?—Yes, I can lend you a translation—(for I don't think you read Italian)—*my translation!* It gained the prize at Hanbury-house. Miss Honeywood highly approved it; and she gave me the prize without hesi-

tation. This lovely bracelet," she added, (holding out her arm as she spoke,) "with this dear lock of her hair in the clasp!" and she kissed it affectedly. "She's a sweet love, that darling Miss Honeywood! She has a dear affectionate heart!—But you'll like to read it, my dear aunt?"

"Read what, my child?" inquired Mrs. Allan; who, with her brother, had stood in mute amazement during Maria's harangue.

"Read my prize translation of Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido*!"

"Not I, Maria, if you'd pay me for it."

There was a slight curl about Maria's upper lip, which some persons might have called contemptuous; but Mr. Graham did not observe it, and Mrs. Allan was short-sighted.

"Maria is a fine scholar," said the father, as the girl turned carelessly away. "She has read a world of books."

"Was the Bible one of them?" asked the old lady. "I am afraid *that* is too old-fashioned a book to be much in favour at that same Hanbury-house."

"I 'm come to have a little conversation with you, niece," said old Mrs. Allan, as she entered the elegant apartment which had been set apart, and furnished expressly for Maria. "Can you give me half an hour?"

"Oh! yes, dear ma'am," replied the affected girl, rising from her harp with a gracious smile: and then, having closed her music book with a deep sigh, as if regretting the necessity which called her away, she came forward and offered her aunt a chair. "But perhaps you would prefer the sofa," she exclaimed, tenderly: and as the old lady was about to seat herself, she dragged her off to a long low sofa, and there sat down beside her.

"If I sit here, child," said her aunt, "I must trouble you to shut down that window, for I can't bear a draught; and do pray take away that bough-pot from under my nose, or those sickly flowers will make me feel quite faintish."

Maria closed the window, and removed the flowers immediately, with the air of a martyr, and sitting down again, took her aunt's hand within her own, and looked up silently into her face.

“ You know, Maria,” the old woman began, “ or if *you* don’t, I do, that you are my godchild; and I think it my duty to ask of you what you know of your Bible? if you have sought salvation through Christ, and the grace of God’s spirit? For, as our catechism has it, ‘ thou art not able to walk in the commandments of God, and to serve him, without his special grace, which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer.’ ”

Before Mrs. Allan could finish what she had to say, the impatient girl had sprung up, her countenance brightening with significant smiles. “ Wait, wait a moment—don’t say a word till I come to you, my dearest aunt;” and while speaking, she drew open a deep drawer in a cabinet of polished satinwood : “ Here !” she cried, flinging down a set of thick volumes, bound in purple morocco, upon the table. She opened one of them, shewing pages closely written from top to bottom : “ Here, judge for yourself ! these are my religious exercises, my Sunday themes ! Dear Miss Honeywood has added a few remarks to each volume !

Religion was not neglected at Hanbury-house. We made notes in church on the sermon—here are some of mine”—And she slowly turned over a few pages, reading all the while audibly to herself. “Oh! but let me see? you’ll wish to look into this volume—the third; no, the fourth—on confirmation! Here it begins, ‘Theme the first.’” Then again, she suddenly interrupted herself. “I do not know if I ever told you that I was confirmed *last half*. We all went (we elder ones, I mean) to church, dressed in pure spotless white—so elegant! white pelisses, and long white veils! Miss Honeywood lent me her best veil, which came to my knees—I was always her favourite!”

Poor Mrs. Allan was quite confounded. She had half expected haughtiness, contempt, carelessness in the answers of her niece to her questions; but this eager readiness, this joyful anxiety to show forth all her religious acquirements, overwhelmed her. To every thing she said, her niece bowed assent, and then turned to some part of her morocco

volumes ; and read aloud, in a theatrical manner, the fine flimsy sentences, full of sounding words, under which the sense was so smothered, that the old lady gave up the search for sense as hopeless ; and shaking her head, rose up from the sofa, and abruptly quitted the apartment.

A few months after her return home, Miss Graham became acquainted with a lady who had taken a small house near ———. Mrs. Hunter Bond was a very gay, though not a very young widow, whose mother had been first cousin to Lord L——, and whose husband had been younger brother to Sir Benjamin Hunter Bond. She had very little money, but great pretensions to stylishness ; and Maria told her cousin, Bessy Allan, the first time they passed Mrs. Hunter Bond in the street, that she was amazingly like her beloved Miss Honeywood of Hanbury-house.

“ Now, my dear !” she said, “ that is what I call style, real style. How well she walks ! and what an elegant pelisse ! Did you ever

see a sweeter silk? I'm glad you have seen her, after all I have told you about Hanbury-house."

"Pray who is that lady in the lilac pelisse, that has just passed?" asked Maria, as she entered Miss Maple, the milliner's shop.

"Why, la! dear miss, don't you know?" replied Miss Maple, who was also gazing after the stranger with all the scrutinizing and digestive observance of a milliner's eye. "It's Mrs. Hunter Bond, that's come to old Parson's Cottage at the back of Duck-lane. Not that I know much about her; for she hardly noticed my card when I called and presented it myself. Mayhap your papa haven't left his yet?"

"I'm sure I don't know.—I never go near that odious shop," said Maria, turning, and addressing the latter part of her sentence to Bessy: then she continued in a low voice as they left the shop, "I am sure Mrs. Hunter Bond shows her taste in never noticing Miss Maple's city finery—I wonder who would, that knows any thing of style!"

Miss Graham had discernment enough to

perceive that Mrs. Hunter Bond was really a woman of fashion, though she had taken old Parson's Cottage at the back of Duck-lane. A few days after, while she was sitting half lost in retrospective day-dreams about Hanbury-house, almost heedless of certain indistinct sounds which arose from the shop beneath, Mrs. Hunter Bond appeared in Lady Mobray's barouche, in earnest conversation with the Lady Harriet Mobray. Maria was thrown into a restless state of anxiety, which scarcely left her till she had become acquainted with so stylish a person. Maria knew that her wishes could not be gratified without some difficulty ; but she had an enterprising character, and in her own mind the thing was soon determined. Chance, however, brought about the meeting better than her best manœuvring could have done. She was one afternoon playing on the piano-forte to an old lady, who had known and noticed her from a child, and to whose house Maria was always delighted to be asked, when Mrs. Hunter Bond was announced.

“Oh! pray, don't let me interrupt you?” she

said ; and smiled most graciously upon Maria, who had risen from the music-stool. Having spoken to the old lady, she turned again to Maria. " I am very fond of music ; and this," she continued (taking up a piece of loose music which lay on the table), " this is very fine, and very difficult too. I think I have heard you mention a young friend, Mrs. Andrews, who sometimes indulged you by bringing her music?" Mrs. Andrews bowed assent. " Am I so fortunate as to have met her now?" Mrs. Andrews bowed again. Maria was prevailed upon to play, and she did play with execution, and with feeling. Mrs. Hunter Bond appeared so pleased, that the old lady pressed her to pass the rest of the evening with Maria and herself. As for Maria, she was delighted, and her delight seemed to inspire her with a peculiar power of pleasing : her conversation was found equal to her playing, and Mrs. Hunter Bond inwardly congratulated herself on having found so agreeable a companion. Maria was at that time very lovely ; her large, dark eyes were full of intelligence ; her dark brown glossy

hair was loosely fastened up with almost classical elegance: her dress also was elegant and more simple than usual; and her shoes and feet were as delicately neat as those of a Frenchwoman.

Mrs. Hunter Bond was a keen observer; and she often wondered within herself, during the evening, who this Miss Graham could be. "Graham! Graham!" she said at length, when Maria had taken her departure (for she had determined to outstay her): "Mrs. Andrews, do tell me who is this young friend of yours? I don't remember to have heard her name before—Lady Mobray never mentioned her—where does she reside? In the town, I suppose, for her carriage did not come for her."

"She will be one of the richest heiresses in this county," replied Mrs. Andrews: "but her father is a grocer."

"Oh!—a grocer!"—Mrs. Hunter Bond said nothing more, but also took her leave.

Mr. Graham possessed a farm in a beautiful valley about two miles from the town where he resided, which, under the improve-

ments of Maria, soon grew into a sort of cottage *ornée*.

Her father gave this farm to his daughter on her nineteenth birth-day; and afterwards Maria passed more than half her time at the Cottage-farm, as she now named it.

Mrs. Andrews was often in very delicate health, and Maria succeeded in prevailing upon the old lady to pass a few weeks with her at the Cottage-farm, and, indeed, manœuvred so well when Mrs. Hunter Bond called upon Mrs. Andrews, that the former was induced to repeat her visit—"to pass a long day with them."

Mrs. Hunter Bond was also prevailed upon to return home in Miss Graham's little pony-cart, and Maria loaded the cart with flowers and fruit, and vegetables, and cream, and butter, and brown bread, and eggs. The next day Mrs. Andrews received a note from her friend, in which Miss Graham was spoken of in terms which made Maria blush with pleasure, and the fair writer described herself as quite *ennuyée* since her return home; and half promised to pass another long day

at the Cottage-farm. In fact, Mrs. Hunter Bond, from that time, found it very convenient, when free from all engagements with her friends in high life, to profit by the liberal attentions of the wealthy Miss Graham. Sometimes, certainly, when in the company of Lady Mobray and her set, she had passed Miss Graham without noticing her ; but then (as she often reminded Maria in private) she was so shockingly near-sighted ! she often passed her dearest friends ! She had, indeed, made such unpleasant mistakes sometimes, by bowing to strangers, in her over anxiety not to be rude to any one, that she had almost determined not to bow to any one ! “ You know, therefore, I cannot ever be really rude.” “ She cannot ever be really rude ! ” repeated Maria to herself.—She wished to feel persuaded of this, and she had little difficulty in swallowing down her doubts.

CHAPTER II.

MARIA was staying for a few weeks with her friend Miss Honeywood, when she was suddenly recalled home by the dangerous illness of her mother. She arrived only in time to behold the corpse of that tender and kind-hearted parent. Within a year of his wife's death, Mr. Graham was also taken ill; and Maria, who had always fondly loved her parents, was pleased to think that she had an opportunity of showing her affection for her father by all those little numberless attentions which women only seem to understand. But notwithstanding the unremitting care and tender nursing of his child, and the skill of the first medical men that could be procured, Mr. Graham's disorder soon assumed symptoms of a very alarming character. From having been remarkably large and fat, he became rapidly emaciated to a frightful degree. He could not bear Maria to leave him; yet her liveliest conversation soon failed to cheer

him; and when she read to him the sort of books to which he had once loved to listen, he would tell her that he could not keep up his attention, and that she had better leave off reading. Maria prepared with her own hands every little dainty which she thought might please him; but though at first, and if taken to him by surprise, he would try to eat, his appetite soon failed him altogether.—About day-break one morning, Maria, who had been sitting up all the night, alone, in her father's sick chamber, was insensibly dropping to sleep, almost worn out with the fatigue of repeated watchings. Her father had seemed to lie in a stupor during the chief part of the night, but he suddenly called out in a louder voice than usual, and bade his daughter come to him. Maria started up, fearing that he had been suddenly taken worse; but, on approaching the bed, she found her father sitting up, and wide awake. There was a peculiar expression of serious thought upon his countenance, and as he spoke, Maria was astonished to observe that he had recovered much of that self-possession which had, for weeks,

been gradually deserting him. "I do not know," he began, "whether I have been dreaming, or merely wandering in my thoughts, but many circumstances of my younger days have been presented to my mind; among which, one has continually come before me—the little chamber in which my own poor father passed the last months of his mortal life.—I have often told you that he died very young: he was not more than eight and twenty; but he over-exerted himself in his cure, soon after he was made minister of the little village of N——, in Aberdeenshire; and, with mistaken zeal, as he himself afterwards confessed, instead of laying by for a time, he became even more unrelaxing in his labours. A neglected cold preyed on his enfeebled frame with such fatal rapidity, that he was carried in a few months to his grave, leaving his wife and four infants (for the eldest was scarcely six years old), almost in beggary. I can even now, in thought, see him as he used to sit in his large chair, pointing out with his long thin fore-finger, verse after verse, in the Bible from which he made me read to him. I think you look

very like him now, Maria, as you stand there so grave, and pale with the fatigue of your kind nursing of your poor father ! He used to talk to me very often, and sometimes, till he could scarcely open his mouth from the exertion ; but not a word that he said do I remember, except that he told me not to forget how that my father's best comfort was his Bible ! The strangeness of this assertion made me remember it ; for it *was* very strange to me. I could find no comfort in the Bible, because I felt it very contrary to my inclination to be obliged to leave my own merry play in the green field, before the manse, to read long chapters out of an old heavy book which I could not understand.

“ When my mother went up with us to her rich uncle's in London, I used to hear very little of my poor father ; for she soon married again : and I remember that my uncle and her new husband, when talking together, often agreed that my father must have been a half-crazed Methodist to go on in the ways that he did : and then my mother would sigh, and seem as if she felt what they said to be

too true, though it grieved her to hear them speak so: but she never contradicted them. She was a kind mother, but I now fear a worldly woman! However, I must shorten all this.—Maria, I have lived many years, and made a large fortune, and enjoyed many comforts; but I now believe that I am on my death-bed, and that I must soon leave this world for ever. It is this fear that has made me appear so low and so lost of late, though I have till now kept my thoughts to myself. Last night, as it began to grow dark and gloomy, you had just left the room, and for a few minutes I was in such a low way that my very heart and soul seemed to die within me. All, on every side of me, was hopeless; for I felt no comfort in looking back, and I could only see the grave before me. I cried out to God in my distress, but I don't think I had any thought of praying in my heart: persons, you know, will cry out, 'Lord have mercy upon me,' from mere habit. There was a something, however, that seemed just to whisper to my heart, 'Rise up and pray;' but I did not care to exert myself, even in

thought, to do so. From this state I fell into the sort of dreaming I have told you of. Now, Maria, as I can find no comfort from this world, I begin to suspect that my poor father was right about the Bible. Send to the curate, will you, and ask him to be so kind as to come and see me ?”

Maria did not reply, for her heart was full of grief, and she felt that if she tried to speak she should be unable to restrain her tears.

“Don’t you like to send for the curate, my love, for you have not answered me ?”

“O yes ! dear, dear father,” she cried, clasping both her father’s hands in her own ; and then kissing them repeatedly—“O yes ! I am delighted to hear you speak as you do, though I can’t bear to hear you talk of death. Of course I will send for the curate instantly, and I hope he will give you comfort.”

Mr. Temple was sent for : he was one of the mildest of human beings, and universally beloved. Maria received him in her own sitting-room, and she was charmed with the elegance of his manners, for he was a man of high birth, and accustomed to high society,

though he then was performing for a stipend not so high as that which is given to a French cook, the laborious duties of curate to the crowded parish of ———. Mr. Temple was very poor, and very independent; he was therefore not popular among some few of the purse-proud and ignorant of his parishioners. Mr. Graham had always liked the frank simplicity of the young curate, and he welcomed him with much pleasure. He begged to be left alone with Mr. Temple. When Maria returned to her father's apartment, Mr. Temple was gone, but the sick man seemed more downcast and thoughtful than he had ever been before. Maria heard him once or twice sigh heavily, and he spoke to her in so desponding a way, that at last she went to her own apartment and wept bitterly. It happened the next day that she saw Mrs. Andrews, and in reply to her inquiries after her father, she mentioned the state of his spirits. He appeared, she said, like one who had received some very distressing intelligence; but when she had questioned him

on the subject, he had assured her that his mind was not so disturbed as she imagined. "Indeed, no one had been with him but Mr. Temple."

"And who in the world would you have had, my dear Maria?" said the old lady, with a look full of meaning. "I'm sure I don't wonder at his being in low spirits if that young man has been with him. I know this, that he came to see me during a very serious attack which very nearly carried me off last year, and talked to me in such a manner, with that gentle voice of his, that really my nerves suffered exceedingly. I declined seeing him again, and I should strongly advise you to contrive some way of preventing his paying your father another visit, or you may have him in a terrible state of mind. For my part, I detest such cant. I think I have lived a few years longer than Mr. Temple; nor do I look to him to tell me my duty."

Mrs. Andrews spoke like an ignorant and prejudiced person; but before Maria left her, she had determined to see Mr. Temple, when

he next called, and to take care that he did *not* see her father. The curate called that same evening, and Maria herself made an excuse, (which might have been called a lie) when he declared his intention of going up to her father's chamber. He seemed much disappointed; but before he took his leave, he put a small volume into her hands, which he requested her to read at times to her father. She had been on the watch while he spoke to her, and she thought that he certainly did sometimes speak in a very strange way. She read part of his book, but it made her so thoughtful, that she determined not to let her father see it. Mr. Graham expressed his surprise, as night drew on, that the young clergyman had not called again, and he wondered, he said, why a book which Mr. Temple had promised to send him never came.

"Oh! I can read to you," said Maria, taking no notice of her father's remark about Mr. Temple. "Shall I read to you?"

"I wish you would, my love."

Maria did read, but perhaps she was unfortunate in her choice of a book; or she did

not feel what she read. Her father, her uniformly kind father, did not seem particularly pleased; nor did he make a single remark after she had put down the book. Mr. Graham was restless and uneasy in his mind all that evening, and during the following day he seldom spoke to any one, but became more and more disquieted, only remarking at times, that he was surprised such a man as Mr. Temple had not kept his word.

“He might have sent, if he could not come to me;—but perhaps he is not well.”

“Perhaps he is not,” repeated Maria.

“You might send and inquire, my dear.”

Maria did not reply; she was just quitting the room. He called after her, “Do you not think we might send, Maria?”

“Certainly,” she replied, and hurried down stairs, quite determined not to send to Mr. Temple: but, to her annoyance, she found that the curate had just entered the house. “Oh! I cannot see him, Jenny!” she cried in a whisper; and gliding up a few stairs, she entered her own apartment. “Tell him,” she said to the servant, “that your master is

too ill and low to see any stranger this evening, and that I will not trouble him to call so often—I can send for him when Mr. Graham wishes to trouble him.” Mr. Temple went away; and as Jenny came up stairs again, Maria beckoned to her. “Be sure not to tell your master that the curate has been here,” she said to Jenny in a very familiar tone, “for I do not know what has come to him since Mr. Temple was last here.”

“La! Miss, and that’s quite true,” replied the ignorant girl; “and master takes on more when you are out of the room. That very morning I was on the landing, while the door was ajar, and I heard the curate reading such fearful words! He talked of master’s sins being all like scarlet; and about wool: and said you could not bring a clean thing out of an unclean.”

“Nonsense, nonsense!” Maria murmured to herself: for, not much better read in the Bible than the stupid servant girl, she was quite unconscious that she was sneering at the words of God himself.

“And then they went to prayer,” Jenny

continued, "and the parson called master a helpless sinner; and I heard master sob as if his heart was broken."

"Very well, Jenny!" exclaimed Miss Graham, assuming her usual didactic tone; "you must now see the necessity of keeping your master from being disturbed in such a manner again."

Some hours after this short conference, when Maria entered her father's chamber, she found Jenny standing near the door, looking much confused, and hesitating. Mr. Graham stopped, for he had been speaking in a loud voice to the servant, as his daughter appeared. He looked at his daughter, and then at the servant girl; and he observed a glance pass between them. "You may go," he said to the girl; and Jenny hastened out of the room. He looked in his daughter's face, sorrowfully, and yet sternly; and said, "Maria, why have you done this?"

"Done what?" she exclaimed, astonished.

"Don't interrupt me, child," he said: "*you* know what you have done. I suspected something of the sort, and I am now

convinced by the confusion, and (I am sorry to say it) the lies of that girl, she has been told to keep back the truth; and by whom, Maria? You can answer *that*—you saw me wretched—you knew that I earnestly desired to see him, and you have kept back Mr. Temple. You have sent him away—you have been helping to ruin your father's soul. When the doctor came to attend to my body's health, you could let him come up; but you care not to let my soul perish. Is not it so? Do you expect I shall ever leave this bed again till they carry out my body to bury it? Can you tell me where to find comfort? I tell you plainly, that I find no comfort even in you, my poor child, dearly as I love you; and certainly not in my money; no, not in any thing upon the face of the earth. I have been looking higher lately; *groping*, I should say, for I'm almost in the dark. I wish some one to come and tell me the plain truth, as it is in God's Bible; for I'm but a poor Bible scholar."

Maria did not answer a word, but she co-

vered her face with her hands, and trembled from head to foot.

"Tell me, Maria," he continued, after a short pause: "come nearer to me, child, and tell me what reason you had for sending Mr. Temple away?"

Maria scarcely knew what to say, for she was apt, as many of us are, to act without thought. She murmured something about her father's spirits, and her fears that Mr. Temple had been alarming him as to the state of his soul. She knew that he had spoken in a very strange manner to other persons (she said "persons," though Mrs. Andrews was the only person she could have mentioned). He was certainly very mild, in his usual manner, but—

"You have said enough, Maria!" exclaimed her father. "I see that the best excuse which I can make for you is, that you have been cruelly thoughtless. How unjust ignorance and prejudice can make us! But allow me to remind you, that *I* am the best judge on this subject. I am in low spirits.

I have many fears about my salvation, and these fears have worn a more distinct reality since I have conversed with Mr. Temple. He told me much to alarm me; but he told me what I felt to be the plain truth; and he told me in the kindest manner, speaking as a person subject to the same fears. Nor did he speak to me alone of the justice of the God whom I had offended. He told me of the mercies of the Saviour who had died for me. He only showed me my lost state, that he might teach me to prize that peace which the world cannot give; and to seek it in the right way."

"But, my dear father," replied Maria, "surely he could not say you were in a lost state? I really cannot imagine what sins he could find in you. You have lived a long life, and you have been universally respected. You have been a good husband—the kindest of fathers—an excellent master—a friendly neighbour—a loyal subject: you have been a regular attendant at church—you have been very kind to the poor—you are no drunkard——"

“ Stop !” cried her father, who had several times been about to interrupt her. “ Let me hear no more of this, Maria, unless you would be cruel enough to put the words of the impious Pharisee into my mouth, and say for me, ‘ I thank God I am not as other men are : I fast twice in the week, I give alms of all that I possess.’—A death-bed is not quite the place upon which a man should make out the list of his poor virtues among his fellows. You had better ask me how long they shall make my coffin.—You had better fall down on your knees and pray for my soul with me. No, no, my poor child ! I do not mean to be harsh with you ; but tell me, if you can, whether this character among men will save me in heaven ?”

Maria replied, that she could not see any reason why he should fear : such a character as his must be more pleasing to God than that of a wicked person.

“ It may be so—I doubt not but it is, my child ; but answer me this question ? What religion do you profess ?”

“ Christianity,” she replied.

“And what is Christianity?”

“The religion of Jesus Christ.”

“Very well—you are called a Christian. You would doubtless be offended if any one told you that you were a heathen?”

Maria owned that she should.

“But might not a heathen possess all the virtues which you have declared belong to my character? And is not something more required of a Christian? Mr. Temple repeated to me a few very striking words: * ‘If a man have not the *spirit* of Christ, he is none of his.’ The *name* alone will not save us. You imagine, perhaps, that Mr. Temple told me abruptly that I was a great sinner; and that I was in a lost state. We hear of ministers who terrify their hearers with unnecessary horrors. Mr. Temple is not one of them. He did not make a cry out about my being a sinner; but, in the simplest and mildest way, he proved to me that I *was* one. He allowed that the least moral action would meet with its reward; but he said that the nature of the *reward* would be according to

* Romans, ch. 8, v. 9.

the nature of the *principle* on which the action was performed. ‘If a man does well to please himself and his fellow men,’ he said, ‘he will not lose his reward; but his principle was earthly, and he will receive his reward on *earth*: he will be respected, or loved, or admired, among his fellow men: but if, although he is living in a Christian land, and calling himself a Christian, he has not had a thought to please God by his good conduct, how can he hope that God will reward him in heaven?’ He then reminded me that the commandment which Jesus Christ himself has called the first and great commandment, is to **“love the Lord our God with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and with all the mind.”* And he made me feel, when he turned my thoughts back upon my past life, that I had indeed utterly disregarded this first and greatest of God’s commandments. He proved to me, that although there could be no holiness without morality, yet there might be much morality without any holiness; and he added these words of

* Luke, 10th chap. 27th verse.

the Apostle of Christ: 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' Alas! I had not a word to say, except to cry out, 'what shall I do to be saved?' I have had more than my reward among my fellow men; for I believe I am respected and esteemed. I think I shall die regretted by those around me; but I have only now learnt that the Christian must have laid up his treasure in heaven, or his heart cannot be there also. My treasure and my heart have been both below, upon earth; I have only now begun to long after heaven. Mr. Temple did not leave me thus wretched. He felt for my distress, and he entreated me to seek for pardon by the only way through which it is given to man, through Jesus Christ, Who says of himself, * 'I am the way and the truth and the life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by me.' He pointed out to me that Saviour dying upon the cross for all sinners who would turn and be saved; and he said that the spirit of God was given to all who sought him, to enable them to become not only holy on earth, but

* 14th chap. 6th verse.

happy in heaven. He promised to come to me again; and you, my child, have forbidden him."

Some characters would have been cut to the heart, not only at *hearing* such solemn reproaches from the lips of a dying father, but by the consciousness that those reproaches were deserved; and for a short time Maria was overwhelmed with shame and contrition, and determined to confess her meanness to Mr. Temple, and implore his forgiveness and advice: but when she left her father's chamber, the serious impressions she had received were soon effaced from her heart; and she began to feel that it would be very unpleasant to expose herself by such 'a needless confession.' She wrote, however, a very polite note to Mr. Temple, and requested him to continue his kind attentions to her father; and she dwelt in very flattering language on the *satisfaction*, the *comfort* which her father had experienced from his instructions, and subscribed herself, 'his most grateful and respectful servant.'

"And now," she thought within herself,

“ I might as well just caution my father against saying that I have in any way prevented his seeing so much as he wished of Mr. Temple.” She stole up lightly to her father’s chamber, and, drawing aside the closed curtains, was beginning to speak, when suddenly her soft and guarded words were turned to shrieks.—Her father was dead. The exertion and agitation of his late interview with Maria had proved too much for his sinking strength; and Jenny (whom his daughter had summoned to supply her place during her short absence) having, as she afterwards expressed herself, just stepped out before Maria entered, he had expired alone and unsupported.

Mr. Temple came, but now attendance was indeed useless. Maria was in too distracted a state to notice any one.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER her father's death, Maria removed to the Cottage-farm. Mr. Graham had left his business, and his house in ———, with a thousand pounds, to his nephew Luke Allan. Maria came into the possession of eighty thousand pounds. She cared not then, however, for her money, but shut herself up, and gave way in an extravagant manner to grief. The fatigue which she had undergone during her father's illness, and her neglect of her health, had reduced her to a very weak state. Her friends begged her to take medical advice, and her physician advised change of air. He thought the mild and refreshing climate of the south Devon coast would be particularly beneficial.

Maria replied, in a rather peevish manner, that she could not bear to leave home. She did not think change of air could do her good.

The physician declared that he knew a lady who was then residing at Sidmouth—his

wife had just received a letter from her, in which she had expressed herself delighted with the place. Miss Graham might have heard of her—Mrs. Hunter Bond!

Maria raised her head like one suddenly revived. "Oh! yes, she was slightly acquainted with Mrs. Hunter Bond, and a very charming woman she was! she had met her frequently at Mrs. Andrews."

Maria set off for Sidmouth. In her way through London, she remained for a few weeks at the house of her friend, Miss Honeywood. While there, she provided herself with what Miss Honeywood termed "a suitable equipage."

Miss Graham had been some time at Sidmouth without having seen or heard any thing of Mrs. Hunter Bond. At last she happened to meet her in a shop at Exeter; and from that time they became intimate friends. Miss Graham had been for some time anxiously seeking for some person to reside with her as a companion and chaperon. She had been disappointed in a lady whom Miss Honeywood had half promised would

follow her to Sidmouth ; and she thought that perhaps Mrs. Hunter Bond might know of some person who could find her society sufficiently agreeable to become her companion. But what was her surprise ! her delight ! when Mrs. Hunter Bond (with a grace peculiarly her own) condescended to say, that she preferred the society of Miss Graham to that of most persons whose friendship she valued ; that she was herself wearied of her lonely life ; in fact, she made Maria believe that she was conferring a great favour, when she was suiting her own convenience, and became herself the companion and chaperon of Miss Graham.

The two ladies found the climate of Sidmouth agree so well with them, that, by her friend's advice, Miss Graham parted with the Cottage-farm, and purchased a beautiful cottage there. Maria, who began to visit among persons of much higher rank than her own, was heartily glad to get away from ———, and her relations there. She found Mrs. Hunter Bond not quite so perfect as she had imagined ; but still she had no great reason

to repent of her choice ; for her new friend, though rather sarcastic, and not a little selfish, was too pleased with her situation to make herself an unpleasant companion.

The events of Maria's life for the next two years are too uninteresting to be dwelt upon. She passed her time either at Sidmouth, or in London, and perfected herself considerably in her various accomplishments under the first masters ; so that she soon spoke many of the modern languages fluently ; played and sung in the first style ; and drew admirably. Her beauty and acquirements were admired in some of the highest circles in London ; and Maria and her friend managed so well, that when the question was asked, " Miss Graham ! who is she ? " the answer generally was, " Her family are originally Scotch : her father, or grandfather, was in the church." She had many suitors ; but Mrs. Hunter Bond, unwilling to leave so agreeable a home, talked to her so effectively of the interested views which young men often had, and of her own fears lest her dear Miss Graham's fortune should be the prize most sought

after ; and every now and then dropped hints in which the late Mr. Hunter Bond's name was mentioned, and her own wretchedness as a wife was glanced at : that Maria assured herself she had found a real friend, and she willingly followed that friend's advice. Perhaps the secret of this readiness to refuse the offers which she received (a secret unknown to Maria herself), was, that she had hitherto remained both heart and fancy free.

It was at the commencement of the third season which Maria passed in London, that she was taken seriously ill. Since her father's death her health had never been strong ; and she had had occasional fits of low spirits, from which all the gaiety of her favourite friend could scarcely rouse her. The truth was, that Maria could not sometimes help feeling that she was not going on quite in the right way. She loved the world and the things of the world ; but she could not forget her father's dying admonitions. She could not feel altogether at her ease, while she knew her conduct to be in some respects very heartless ; shunning, as she did, her own near

relations, whose only crime was their vulgarity of manners and station. She was in that state of mind when a warning would not have come unfelt, or unheeded.

The physician who attended Maria insisted on her giving up all parties ; and told her, that if she expected to recover, she must rise and retire to rest at very early hours. Being thus forced to live in a rational way, she began to reflect more than she had ever done. She learnt to set a proper value on the attentions of her fashionable friends, who soon appeared to forget her when her doors were no longer thrown open to them, and splendid dinners, and concerts, and balls provided for their entertainment.

As the spring advanced, Maria longed for the fresh air and quiet of the country. She therefore hired a small villa within a few miles of London, that she might be still under the care of her favourite physician. Mrs. Hunter Bond seemed now a really kind friend ; and fond as she was of amusements, she cheerfully gave them up, and went with her friend.

It happened that the minister of the parish in which Maria resided was a powerful preacher. He was certainly injudicious in the doctrines he brought forward; but he was thoroughly in earnest. There was excitement in his preaching; and although Maria, who knew little or nothing of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, found much fault with his sermons, she never failed to attend them. Mrs. Hunter Bond was at first extremely affected by his preaching. Her cambric handkerchief was frequently raised to her eyes, and her eau-de-luce to her nose—but she was all smiles and delight as soon as the service was over, and ready to congratulate herself and others on having heard “so charming a discourse!” She looked upon a preacher as a fine actor, and her feelings were all alive to his eloquence; but she did not seem to have an idea that a word in his sermon could be applied to her own case. She verified in herself that remark of Beza, that ‘they who have their minds fixed on earthly things are utterly blind to heavenly things,’ though they be never so plainly set forth to

them.' At last, however, she grew tired of "such charming discourses," and gladly availed herself of any excuse not to accompany Miss Graham to church.

One Sunday, Maria turned to her friend, as they were sitting together at luncheon after morning service, and said: "Do you not think, as the weather is so fine, we might walk to church this afternoon? I think it right to give the horses and servants as much rest as I can on the sabbath."

"Certainly, my dear!" replied Mrs. Hunter Bond; "the weather is delightfully fine, and I will walk with you, if you please; but before you spoke, I had *dedicated* this afternoon to writing a few letters. I never can find time to write during the week; and on Sundays the time hangs so heavily on one's hands, that I am glad to avail myself of an opportunity."

"But," replied Maria, "you have forgotten that Mr. Godfrey preached only the first part of his sermon this morning; he will give the conclusion in the afternoon: you would not like to miss it?"

“ Indeed I should have no objection ; for, to tell you the truth, I did not attend much to the first part. I get rather tired of Mr. Godfrey’s fine harangues.”

“ I think him often severe,” said Maria ; “ but it seems to me impossible not to attend to him. He really searches the heart with such wonderful power, that I am sometimes afraid he is addressing himself only to me ; and I dare not look up, lest I should find all eyes fixed upon me.”

“ Dear ! How strange ! Depend on it, my love ! the man never dreams of being personal to you ; indeed if he did, he would be excessively impertinent. If I were to suspect him of taking such a liberty with me, I would not go near his church ; for I cannot endure such abominable cant.”

“ But I do not think it fair to accuse Mr. Godfrey of cant,” replied Maria. “ He sets before us the doctrines of the scriptures, and supports all he asserts by some text from the word of God.”

“ My dear Maria,” interrupted her friend, rising hastily, “ pray don’t go on ; you are

really growing quite methodistical ; but, tell me, shall I walk with you to church or not, this afternoon?"

" Oh ! no, pray write your letters," Maria replied, coolly. " William will carry my books, and walk behind me : I need no other attendance."

She was soon such an attentive hearer of Mr. Godfrey, that her friend became at last seriously alarmed lest his preaching might induce Maria, who was now recovering her health, to give up her follies and gaieties altogether ; and she saw the necessity of continually using all her powers of argument against the *delusions* (as she called them) to which her friend was yielding : but Mrs. Hunter Bond's powers of argument were wonderously feeble, and their disputes, instead of convincing Maria, rather rooted them both (as will be often the case in such disputes) more thoroughly in their own opinions. Maria, however, was often surprised to find herself opposing sentiments which she would once have declared as her own. These disputes soon began to estrange the friends

on other points ; for Maria's temper was not improved by her religious knowledge. She did not receive the word of God with singleness of purpose, and with an honest and good heart. She did not search and examine her own heart and life, to see if the fruits of the spirit were springing up there ; but she began to think much of externals, and to measure herself by others, and to compare herself with others ; and to thank God in her heart that she was not as *some others*, Mrs. Hunter Bond among the number. She had some light, but it only served to lead her farther astray.

When Mrs. Hunter Bond saw that such were the effects of what Maria called "*preaching the Gospel*," she sneered in her heart at all real religion ; for she was so thoughtless, and so ignorant, as to confound all professors of the gospel together. She thought, and she was right, that Maria had become exceedingly disagreeable ; and as she had been generally good-humoured and obliging before what Maria called "*her conversion*," she set down the change to what Maria called "*evangelical truth*." Though Maria had become

so unlike the character to which she pretended, the fault was certainly not so much in the sower, nor in the seed sown; but, as I said before, in the soil of her own heart. Mr. Godfrey would have grieved sincerely had he seen the way in which Maria perverted the instruction she received.

The summer was far advanced, when Mrs. Hunter Bond, who had grown heartily disgusted with Maria's new opinions and ways, accepted an invitation from a friend at Cheltenham, and set out on her journey, secretly determined not to return to her "dear friend," as she still called her. Maria wept a little at her departure, but was heartily glad, when shortly after she received a letter to say that, "other engagements prevented Mrs. Hunter Bond from again taking up her residence with Miss Graham." Maria felt that she had no farther need of her society. She was no longer so young as absolutely to need a *chaperon*; and she had fully determined to give up the fashionable world: besides, she was too well known as an heiress, and as one who had moved in high society, to need any far-

ther introduction. And now that Maria found herself unincumbered by a worldly and fashionable companion, she changed the ways of her establishment, and made a point of attending the meeting of every sort of religious society within twenty miles of her residence. But notwithstanding the high profession she began to hold, little change had been made in her heart. "That religion promises best, which begins with the conscience, and creates a watchfulness over the heart and tongue; a dread and hatred of hypocrisy, and all sin; and a love of peace and universal holiness. Such a state of heart prepares the way for the proper understanding and reception of divine truths; and they who *thus* receive, will adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour: He will peculiarly regard them, and attend to their prayers *." Such, however, was not Maria's religion: it began in externals; and had all the cant, with little of the spirit, of Christianity. True religion, like the life blood, has its grand reservoir in the heart,

* Scott.

whence it flows throughout the whole frame, even to its farthest extremities; and is ever in motion, flowing from, and returning thither; giving life and strength, freshness and beauty, to the whole man. We reverence even the peculiarities of true religion: and when a humble and contrite heart, accustomed to watch over its every feeling with severe strictness, extends that strictness even to indifferent things, we respect what perhaps we should not imitate. But there is another, a counterfeit religion, current in these days, which is ever busied, not about its own purity, but in pronouncing judgment upon the opinions and the practice of others, and we cannot respect the peculiarities which accompany it; inasmuch as they are but the natural fruits of a deceived heart, and a carnal mind in a saintly disguise. The preaching of Mr. Godfrey was soon discovered to be too cold—too tame—not spiritual enough for Maria; and as the term for which she had engaged her house expired, she determined to leave the neighbourhood.

“Now that is the sort of person,” she said

to an acquaintance with whom she had attended a public meeting where a Mr. Cramp had made a long and most extraordinary harangue, "that Mr. Cramp is the sort of minister I should wish to sit under."

Mr. Cramp was then officiating minister in a beautiful village in Hampshire; and a few days after that conversation, Maria's new acquaintance showed her an advertisement of an estate, ("the very place she ought to have,") in the parish where Mr. Cramp preached. Maria went to look at the estate—was delighted with the house, and every thing about it; and soon after became its possessor.

Within a few miles of Miss Graham's estate was Kirkdale Manor, the old family seat of Sir George Montagu, in which he resided with his mother, Lady Elizabeth Montagu. Sir George was about thirty years of age, a quiet, reserved character, supposed to be almost entirely under the control of his mother. Lady Elizabeth was said to be very strict and peculiar in her religious opinions; and she lived much secluded from the world.

Miss Graham was a constant attendant on

Mr. Cramp's ministry; and not long after her arrival in his parish, he waited upon her to request her to become joint patroness with Lady Elizabeth Montagu, of a society he was about to establish in the neighbourhood. This proposal led to a slight acquaintance with Lady Elizabeth. She was pleased with the character of Miss Graham, as given by Mr. Cramp; and when the two ladies attended the first meeting of the society, Lady Elizabeth, who was accompanied by her son, introduced the young baronet to Maria.

Sir George and his mother had been looking out, the one for a wife, the other for a daughter-in-law, for some years, but hitherto they had been unable to agree in their choice. At length, the very person had appeared: at least, Sir George thought so; and though his mother raised some objections, and did not find Miss Graham so very irresistible, she at length gave a sort of negative consent, and proposals of marriage were made in due form. Maria liked Sir George very much, and liked the connexion still better; and soon after became Lady Montagu. When Maria entered

the magnificent hall of Kirkdale Manor as its mistress, and looked round on the old portraits of her husband's ancestors, she felt more deeply than she had ever done, that her own low birth and vulgar connexions were an annoyance and discredit to her, and she determined very resolutely to prevent their attracting the notice of her husband, or his family. She had quieted her conscience as well as she could, before her marriage, by presenting her cousin and former friend, Bessy Allan, with a sum of money sufficient to secure a moderate annuity both to her mother and herself.

And now, my reader, if you have found any entertainment from what you have already read of this common-place history, confess that you can feel no interest in so heartless a character as Maria. I must own that she is no favourite of mine; yet many such persons have I heard called "very charming women." In pity to your patience, I will not take you into the society of Kirkdale Manor, now Lady Elizabeth has retired to her jointure house, Hurstwood, in Sussex.

CHAPTER IV.

It was not till four years after their marriage, that Lady Montagu presented her husband with a son, greatly to the delight of the Lady Elizabeth, who stood as sponsor to the child, and named him Augustine—a name which had been from time immemorial in her own family. Of this boy I am about to speak.

At an early age, Augustine endeared himself in a peculiar manner to all who knew him. His disposition was remarkably fine. He was seldom or ever seen out of temper; and there was a natural courteousness about him which rendered his manners very attractive. He was, at the same time, free from all effeminacy of character, frank and open as the day, and as manly as he was gentle. Lady Montagu herself was for many years his chief teacher, and she found in him an affectionate willingness which encouraged her in her work. She often used to rejoice

when she thought upon his wonderful progress in scripture-knowledge; and she considered him, she said, as a vessel chosen early for the service of the Lord. Before he was twelve years of age, he had read the Scriptures several times through; he could pray extempore; and sing numberless hymns with a voice, the sweetness of which had seldom been rivalled. His parents had never allowed their son to leave home. Mr. Cramp became his tutor, and took up his residence in the house; and was, perhaps, one of the most unfit persons that could have been chosen for the purpose. He was narrow-minded, and bigoted to his own religious opinions in no common degree; and those opinions bordered on antinomianism. He had not an idea of suiting his conversation to the understanding of a child, but would hold long and pompous harangues, which Augustine unconsciously acquired the habit of listening to, without attempting to comprehend. His feelings towards Mr. Cramp were a strange compound of dislike and reverence. One might almost compare them to those of an ignorant wor-

shipper towards the idol he worshipped : habit taught him to bow, where reason and inclination, had they been consulted, would have disapproved. In the pulpit, Mr. Cramp was stern, and had the appearance of a man of spare and self-denying habits ; but Augustine often wondered within himself at the gross tastes and indulgences of his tutor when out of the pulpit : he would eat and drink with an immoderate greediness, and his very eyes seemed to feast with a sort of swimming joy on the rich food before him. Altogether, Augustine's home was little suited to make religion captivating to a young and ingenuous mind. The conversation was continually narrowed in, to one set of subjects ; and if an unfortunate stranger happened to introduce any remark of a more worldly character, he was sure to be chilled and awed into silence by the grave looks and astonishment that appeared around him. In company, Lady Montagu was perpetually smiling, and full of little anecdotes, which she repeated with much gentle delight ; but in their domestic circle, Augustine could not help knowing, that there

was present, too generally, a spirit, the fruits of which were not *love*, or *joy*, or *peace*, or *long suffering*, or *gentleness*, or *meekness*. Lady Montagu did not show her real temper till after her marriage; or rather, the seeds which were there did not sprout, and spring up till then. The ways of thinking and acting in which Sir George had been educated were very opposite to those to which Maria was accustomed; and their difference of opinion appeared in the merest trifles. Neither of them had the good sense, or even the good policy, to give way in little things. Maria talked of her principles, where she would have been acting like a Christian wife in yielding to her husband's wishes: and hence it was, that with all their religious knowledge, they were a less united couple than many of their worldly neighbours, who had found out the truth of the remark, that, "trifles make the sum of human things." Gradually, however, the indolence of Sir George's natural disposition began to yield to the ever restless spirit of his lady, and he sunk down into a very quiet, heavy being.

Nay, his sense of hearing acquired an obtuseness to her cutting remarks, and he literally grew fat upon them; and could remain calm and unmoved, and even untouched, in the full fire of her small shot.

Augustine was nearly nineteen when he was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge. In these days, a more innocent and unsuspecting character had been seldom known at his age. His mother and his tutor heaped precept upon precept when they parted from him; but the poor boy tried in vain to recollect what they had said. His father's words were few; but Augustine had never seen him so grave, and so affectionate.

A distant relation to Sir George Montagu, a Mr. Bryan, a steady, well-principled young man, about a year older than Augustine, who had been at college nearly two years, was now his companion to Cambridge.

Almost the whole of the first night which he passed at the university, Augustine lay awake in a fever of tumultuous thought. He had entered the world at last in some

manner his own master ; and who in his situation could have slept ?

He had been asleep scarcely three hours, when his bed-room door was flung open, and his relation, Mr. Bryan, entered the room.

“ What ! in bed ; asleep at this time of day ! ” he shouted. “ Is this your early rising ? Why, my good fellow, do get up, and come to breakfast. I ’ve asked a friend or two to meet you. Well ! ” he called out, after waiting a short time with much impatience in Augustine’s sitting-room, “ I tell you what, I ’ll go to my rooms, for the men will be waiting, and you can follow ; but, I say ! come as soon as you can, and don’t be more fresh than you can help.”

It happened, however, that Augustine was, in the cant language of Cambridge, remarkably fresh ; and his companions often stared and smiled at the simplicity of his notions on most of the subjects discussed. That same morning, the cards of some of his new acquaintances were left at his rooms ; and from one of them, a few days after, he received an

invitation to drink wine with him, after dinner, in hall.

Lady Montagu had charged her son to be very particular in choosing his associates; "to become acquainted," she said, "with none but *decided* characters."

He was debating whether he ought to accept the invitation he had received, when Mr. Bryan entered his rooms.

"Have you had an invitation to wine with Tracey?" he said.

"Yes; here it is," replied Augustine: "but who is Tracey?"

"What! don't you know Tracey? His father is member for Petersfield, and a friend of your father. Lady Emily, his mother, is a very nice woman; very pious and charitable, and all that."

"But are *you* going, James?"

"To be sure I am. Shall I come to your rooms, after hall, in my way for you?"

The cousins went together after hall.

Augustine had no sooner flung down his cap and gown, and received a hearty shake of the hand from Tracey, than he was form-

ally introduced to what seemed at first to him a formidable set; "Lord William Lucas ! Mr. Martin ! Mr. Orm ! Mr. Harrison ! Mr. Fanshaw ! Sir Thomas Power ! Mr. Villiers !" "Which wine do you drink ?" said Tracey, in a very courteous tone ; to which question Augustine replied not very audibly, and filled his glass with port, so full that the wine flowed over. He felt more confused ; and was going to make some remark about his awkwardness, but he perceived that Tracey was already in earnest conversation with Lord William Lucas.

"I'd thank you to pass the bottle, sir," exclaimed Mr. Harrison, in a dry and dignified manner, speaking with his teeth shut, and waking the freshman from a reverie into which he had fallen.

Augustine coloured deeply, and pushed forward the decanters, which were all standing in dread array before him. He then sat in silence for some time, listening to the conversation of those around him. Now and then a few words were dropped to him by Tracey, or by Mr. Villiers, who sat next to

him, to which he replied almost in monosyllables.

"I must trouble you to pass the wine again, sir," said Mr. Harrison again: "but you don't fill your own glass. Don't you drink, sir?"

Augustine poured some wine into his glass.

"Excuse me, sir, but no heeltaps; we always drink off heeltaps here."

"I had rather not drink any more," replied Augustine, in a low voice.

"O, pray do not drink more than you like," cried Tracey, who had observed the confusion of his young guest. "By the bye, Villiers," he continued, addressing himself to Augustine's neighbour, "I've not seen you since your return from Spain. Tell me about your tour; at least tell me if my views are correct:" and rising up, he took a portfolio from his bookcase, and gave it into Villiers' hand. "I do not know if you have been abroad, Mr. Montague; but if you have not, you will perhaps like to look over those drawings."

In a few minutes Augustine had forgotten

his bashfulness, and was engaged in a very agreeable conversation with Mr. Villiers. Tracey was an elegant trifler, with a few good principles and many good feelings. His rooms were furnished rather in the style of a lady's boudoir than a scholar's study. Splendid pictures, busts, and Grecian lamps; richly bound books, and exotic plants, distracted the sight. He read little, gave very pleasant parties, and was in a good set. His chief study seemed to be how to please, and to make himself popular with all who knew him; and he was generally successful. The religious party liked him; for he was accustomed, when at home, to associate with them; and he was to be met, occasionally, at the rooms of a few excellent and serious characters, and attended Trinity Church on Thursday evenings. The sporting party liked him; for he kept two fine horses, rode excessively well, (sometimes as far as Newmarket), was a good shot, and was known to produce, though seldom, a pair of boxing-gloves from the lower cupboard of his gay bookcase!—He had even been seen at Jackson's rooms. The literary

party liked him; for he was known to be idle, but not stupid: his Latin verses were highly approved, and he had been asked to write a tripos, but had refused. The idlers liked him: they were sure to do so, for he was one of them. He managed to trim well among all parties; and that evening he managed to please Augustine. "You will not go," he said to him, as some of the company rose up to hasten to chapel, the bell of which was ringing loudly. "Do stay and pass the rest of the evening with me. I will order coffee into the study, and I will show you a large collection of views in Switzerland, as you seemed pleased with those in Spain."

Augustine remained, and Tracey pressed Villiers, and Lord William Lucas, and Bryan, to remain also. The rest departed; but, contrary to the custom of wine-parties (which generally break up for chapel), they promised to meet again to eat oysters. Coffee and tea were served by Hardman * in the little study, and the select party passed a few delightful hours till they were interrupted by Sir

* A well-known *Gyp* at Trinity College.

Thomas Power and his friend Harrison. "Come, Tracey," cried the former, rubbing his hands together, "let us have the oysters, and a bowl of bishop, and a quiet rubber."

"Oh! yes, supper will be ready immediately; but as to the rubber, I don't know whom you will find to play."

"Trust me for that," cried the young Baronet. "Open that card-table, Tom," addressing Tracey's servant, who had entered the room to set out the supper. "Lucas, will you play?"

"Oh, no, I thank you! I hate cards."

"You will, Villiers?"

"No."

"Nor you, Bryan?"

"I never play."

"Mr. Montague, I hope *you* will not desert us: you and Tracey, with Harrison and myself, will just make up the rubber."

"I don't think you know much about cards, Mr. Montague!" said Tracey.

"No, indeed, I do not; nor do I think I ever shall."

Martin, however, entered while they were

speaking; and Tracey begged Villiers just to take a hand till Orm came in, who, he was certain, would be happy to relieve him. "Of course I could not play if I would," whispered Tracey (leaning, as he spoke to Power, half over the card-table); "it might seem rude to Lucas and Montague, who were never in my rooms till this evening."

Augustine heard this whisper, and he wondered within himself how a serious character, like Tracey, could even talk of the possibility of his playing at cards, the mere name of which he had never heard mentioned but in terms of horror before. The rubber was a very long one, and they did not sit down to supper till it was nearly eleven; and then the conversation was on subjects interesting, from their very novelty, to Montague. After supper, however, he rose up immediately to depart.

"Don't go just yet," cried Tracey, with a beseeching look. "My Gyp will be here in a moment with the bishop."

Montague felt that he ought to go, and said that he must go; and while he was put-

ting on his hat and gown, Villiers and Bryan rose up also.

"Now this is too bad!" continued Tracey, and he gently took Augustine's hat out of his hand. "I beg your pardon," he said, looking down upon the hat as if he had only then discovered that he had taken it, "but do give us the pleasure of your company a little longer. I see how it is—the whole party will be broken up unless you sit down again. Villiers! Bryan! my good fellows! don't be so gothic. I take it quite unkind in *you*! Sit down only for five minutes."

They looked at Montague.

"Oh!" cried Tracey, following up their look, "I'm sure Montague will stay, if you will. Will you not, Montague?"

"Certainly, for five minutes," replied Augustine, laughingly, and threw off his gown.

Villiers and Bryan returned to their seats. The five minutes passed away before the bowl of bishop made its appearance, and Montague soon forgot to think about the time. Every thing around looked so joyous—the lamps burned with such brilliant lustre—

the very walls, with their gilded mouldings, seemed to shine out—nothing was dark or dull—the fire blazed with clear flames—every face was lighted up with smiles and animation—the bishop was excellent—nothing about the room reminded our young freshman that midnight was past. The card-players returned again to their table, but Montague did not see them rise. He was listening to Villiers, who, at Tracey's request, had taken up a guitar, and was singing with a voice of singular power and richness some fine ballads that he had brought from Spain. Every one cried out in their admiration, as he finished singing "Todos cantar la ca-chu-cha," the little song which has been since set by Bishop to the English words "Isabelle, Isabelle."

Augustine was delighted; he had never heard any but what was called sacred music before, much of which did little credit to the taste or the understanding of the singer. "Surely," he said to himself, "there cannot be any thing sinful in listening to such sweet sounds as those."

Bryan looked as delighted as himself; and

soon after asked Villiers if he could sing the "Ranz des vaches."

Villiers sung the real simple air with as much feeling and pathos as if he had been a Swiss goatherd longing for his native mountains; and then he sung Haydn's noble song of "The Rhine." Villiers laid down the guitar; but Lord William asked for one more song, an English song. "Very well, if you wish it," was the answer of the good-tempered singer; "but I must sing no more after that." He sung, with expression that went to the heart, that deeply affecting song of Lord Byron's, with Dr. Whitfield's music,

"When we two parted,
In silence and tears;"

and Augustine forgot every thing else but the song while he was singing.

Every one but the four card-players rose up as soon as the song was over. Bryan took out his watch, and Montague saw, with astonishment, that it was past two o'clock. He felt perfectly confounded, and scarcely knew what he replied when spoken to. He merely remembered that he saw a look of unaffected

weariness on Tracey's face, as he shrugged his shoulders and turned a sidelong glance on the inveterate whist-players.

Villiers, on parting with Montague, invited him to breakfast the next morning. Augustine hesitated. "You are not engaged?" he said.

"Oh! no."

"Very well, then, you *will* come; I shall expect you at ten."

He did not wait for an answer; but shaking Montague warmly by the hand, they parted.

When Augustine entered his own room, he threw himself down on the sofa, heartily vexed with himself. He felt as if he had been committing a heinous crime: but he could not *think*—his ideas were all confused. It was his custom to read a chapter in his Greek testament every night before he went to bed, and he took up the book as usual; but the letters swam before his eyes, and he dropped asleep before he had read a verse. The loud chimes of St. Mary's clock, striking three, aroused him. He gave up all thought of reading, and kneeled down to pray; but

again found himself falling asleep. He rose up, made an effort to put out his candle safely, and in a few minutes was in bed, dreaming that he saw his mother and Mr. Cramp sitting at a card-table, with a bowl of bishop before them ; the former shuffling the cards, while his tutor filled two large tumblers with the steaming wine. His father was sitting with a guitar in his hand, singing very affectedly. Suddenly they all turned to him with frowning faces ; and his mother and tutor began to upbraid him loudly with some terrible sin. He asked in vain for an explanation, till Mr. Cramp at last fished up his hymn-book from the bottom of the bowl.

Augustine lay in a restless state all the night, for he had never drank so much wine in his life before. He woke early, and threw open his window to breathe more freely. All the time he was dressing he felt very wretched, and was not at all satisfied till he had written to refuse breakfasting with Villiers. He then hastened to his college lectures, and afterwards, having sported his door, sat down to read steadily till dinner-time.

After dinner Augustine wrote a long letter to his mother, in which, without mentioning the names of his companions, he confessed, with much deep recrimination, the way in which he had passed the preceding evening. He did not attempt to excuse himself, or to soften the facts in his description; indeed his artless mind coloured its first impressions only too strongly. He concluded by promising to be more cautious in future; and said, that for some time he should refuse all invitations to parties.

The reply of Lady Montague to her son's letter was both illiberal and injudicious. Augustine read it with hopeless and heavy sighs, for it made him tremble to think how next to impossible it would be for him to pass through the perils of a college life, without becoming what Lady Montague called a cast-away! His mother had not added a word of encouragement or approbation on his determination not to enter again into such dissipated company. She wrote as if the mere idea of his doing so were out of the question. Mr. Cramp. had added a short, but severe post-

script; and poor Augustine marvelled, as he thought over the whole letter, what could have induced his parents, as it was not their intention that he should take holy orders, to send him up to a place of such inevitable danger. He bowed, however, in habitual acquiescence to what he considered his duty.

Days, weeks passed away, and the young freshman kept, though with some difficulty, his resolution, and refused every invitation, except one to drink tea with his relation Mr. Bryan, and to dine with a very serious and *decided* graduate, to whom he had brought up a letter of introduction. His evenings were lonely, excessively lonely. He would often sit at his window, after having read hard most of the day, perfectly listless, whistling without knowing that he was doing so, or staring at what passed without, or listening to the wretched performance of one of his neighbours, who was teaching himself the flute. He could not sometimes help wishing that he might hear Villiers sing, if only the dullest hymn, or mingle again in the pleasant conversation of some of those young and elegant

men whom he had met at Tracey's rooms. He grieved to think that their society was sinful, and therefore forbidden. He was, however, interested by a letter which he received from Mr. Cramp. His tutor, after a long prologue of stale advice, informed him, that his own nephew, a most promising youth, was, he had just heard, then at Cambridge, and he was authorised by Sir George and Lady Montague to desire that Mr. Montague would cultivate his acquaintance.

"Tarver! Tarver!" repeated Augustine, as he folded up the letter: "what a strange and vulgar-sounding name!"

He set off that very morning, however, to call on Mr. Tarver, at Queen's. With some difficulty he found his rooms. "Come in," Mr. Tarver called out in a harsh voice, as Augustine knocked at the door. Mr. Tarver was a broad, short little gentleman, who raised his eyes with rather a sullen stare from a mathematical book, as his visitor entered. His face cleared up, and smoothed itself in an astonishing manner, and his wide mouth half split his face breadthways, as he surveyed

the silver-laced gown and hat of the elegant hat-fellow-commoner of Trinity. He jumped up with surprising agility, caught up and set down a chair, and received Montague with exuberant delight, and Montague thought him particularly vulgar and disagreeable.

He talked, however, so long and so fluently in that way, which Augustine had been taught to think the best way, that he distrusted his own taste, and believed that he ought to like Mr. Tarver. He asked his new acquaintance to pass the evening of that day with him, and Mr. Tarver joyfully agreed to do so. But it was in vain that Montague endeavoured to become the intimate friend of Tarver, nor could he ever help feeling constrained in his presence.

At Tarver's rooms he met a set of persons very unpleasing in their sentiments and manners. One of them alone pleased him, a Mr. Temple; but he was excessively reserved, and Augustine tried in vain to become well acquainted with him. The others were all overpoweringly civil and familiar. Temple was quiet, perfectly natural, and yet

elegant in his manners. He listened much, but spoke little; and Augustine wondered to meet him among such a set of narrow-minded, weak-headed companions. Augustine had habitually joined in customs of his own family; but he could not join with the same zeal in the practices of his new associates, when, in the midst of their wine-drinking and idle gossiping, they would all kneel down to pray extempore by turns, and rise up to sing, or rather to drawl out hymns, in which there was little real Christianity, less poetry, and less common sense.

CHAPTER V.

“TELL me, my dear Montague, what do you do with yourself in the evening now? I have not met you, but at that one dinner-party at Mr. S——’s, since you gave me the pleasure of your company at my rooms.”

Montague turned round. He had before succeeded in shunning Tracey: he could not in common politeness do so any longer. They had been sitting in the same pew that Thursday evening; and they were then passing out of Trinity Church through the same door. Augustine liked Tracey, and he replied to his questions with much hearty friendliness; but he spoke, as his custom was, the simple truth, and confessed that he had purposely avoided him because his parties were too gay. “He did not wish, he had no right, indeed,” he said, to make any of his remarks on the subject. “I like *you*,” he said, “very well, but I *do not like* cards, nor bowls of bishop, nor midnight, nay *morning* hours;” nor pro-

fane songs, he was going to add, but he checked himself, for he could not forget the pure and genuine delight with which he had listened to the singing of Villiers.

“ Ah ! I quite understand you,” cried Villiers, as Montague hesitated. “ I know” (here he offered his arm to Augustine, and did not continue his sentence till the other took it), “ I know what you must have felt that evening. I ought to act as you do, but I know not how it is—my friends assemble around me, and I only think of entertaining them. Then, too, the men you met were old school-fellows of mine : we were all boys together, and I can’t pretend to be so much better than they are—they would soon sneer at me ; but come to my rooms to-night, and we will talk the matter over. I am quite alone. We will drink tea together as quietly as two old ladies, and I will turn you away as the clock strikes ten.”

Augustine in his coolest judgment could not find a reason to prevent his accompanying Tracey to his rooms. They talked the matter over together, and Tracey brought forward

with such effect some of the same reasoning with which he had long deceived himself, that Augustine went home that night saying to himself, "After all, there is a great deal of truth and good sense in those arguments of Tracey's."

The next evening Tracey paid Montague an early visit, and invited himself to pass the evening with him. He made himself even more agreeable than before. Augustine had never till then met with any one in whom he felt so inclined to repose his confidence, or rather he had never before been allowed to converse so freely with a young man of his own age, whose society he thought pleasant. The conversation turned on the peculiar habits of their families; and Augustine was astonished to find, that although Tracey seemed to know so much of the world, his parents were as strict as his own. Tracey described the way in which he had been brought up; and while he praised the motives of those who had been about him, he could not resist smiling sometimes at what he called "their ignorance of the world." Augustine did not quite relish any thing like

ridicule on such a subject ; but his common sense forced him to allow there was much truth in many of Tracey's remarks. He was, however, endeavouring to combat them, when Tarver made his appearance. Tarver was more than commonly vulgar, and Montague felt more than commonly annoyed by his oppressive familiarity. Tracey's manner changed as soon as Tarver appeared ; he spoke little ; was very distant ; and Augustine observed, that he raised his head and stared with looks of unfeigned surprise at Mr. Tarver while that gentleman was speaking.

" Who is that strange person, my dear Montague ?" said Tracey, resuming his own manner as Tarver left the room.

Augustine blushed and hesitated, he knew not why, and replied, " His name is Tarver."

" My dear fellow," said Tracey earnestly, " excuse the liberty I take, but I hope that man is not a friend, an intimate friend of yours. I have seen you with him before, and I wondered where you could pick up such a creature. I thought I knew his face, and now you have mentioned his name, I recollect—but

no ! I had better say nothing about him. I have not seen him for some years."

Tracey attempted to change the subject ; but Augustine caught at what he had said, and begged him to be more explicit.

" You dislike that man," he said, " and perhaps you have some reason for doing so : would it not be friendly to tell me what you were nearly betraying ? for I assure you, though I am obliged to see so much of Tarver, I cannot make a friend of him."

" How obliged ?" inquired Tracey.

" Oh ! he is the nephew of a late tutor of mine, and my father and mother have desired me to cultivate his acquaintance."

" My dear Montague," said Tracey, " I am not so very sorry that I have it in my power to guard you against making that man a particular friend, till you have tried and known him much longer : but I should be really grieved if I thought the few words I have spoken could in any way injure him. He may be now, and I trust he is, a very good sort of fellow ; and I would willingly tell him to his face that I am very sorry if

my thoughtless words have hurt him in your opinion. You will not soon again hear any thing on the subject from me, and pray oblige me by forgetting my words as fast as you can. I will tell you any thing about myself," he continued, "as you have so ingenuously confessed the reasons why you shunned me of late; though at present I fear you think me a very profane sort of person, because I have some gay friends, or I should say acquaintances. I rather flatter myself that I have high authority for being on good terms with them. Does not St. Paul say, that he became 'all things to all men?'"

It was strange that both Tracey and Montague (though the latter had learnt the Scripture so often) should forget just then that St. Paul adds to the words, "I became all things to all men," *this* reason, "*that I might save some.*" I fear that had Tracey's reason been given in strict truth, it would have been this, "*that I may please myself.*"

Tracey and Montague were now frequently together; and the latter began gradually to throw off what Tracey called "the shackles of

his early prejudices." But poor Montague was not able to trim, and keep on good terms with all parties. He had more honest openness of character than Tracey. His feelings and passions were more violent, and far less under his control. He soon went on to lengths far beyond what Tracey could approve; and in fact he soon cared little whether Tracey approved or not. He got tired of him, and thought that there was something contemptible in Tracey's anxious desire to please all persons. He was not long in learning that some of Tracey's friends understood his character better than he himself did, and laughed at him behind his back. Augustine liked Villiers far better: he had more manly ways of thinking and acting, and more consistent principles. He had many more faults, but more decided virtues. He did not know much of religion, but he never ridiculed even the religious absurdities of others—nay, he respected them, and often lamented that he had not been brought up among persons whose example and instruction might have taught him better.

As Augustine mingled more and more in the ways of the world, he began to break off his intimacy with his former set. At last he gave them up altogether; for he felt that it would be hypocritical in him to profess sentiments which he no longer felt. Tarver, however, was not to be given up: in vain did Montague tell him, laughing, "that he thought his religion a terrible bore;" he was not to be avoided. He certainly left off inviting Montague to his rooms; but he was continually at Trinity. Montague was rather ashamed of his manners and appearance among his gay and fashionable friends; but he had too much kindness to let him think so. He felt at the same time astonished, that Tarver was neither hurt nor offended at the change in his behaviour towards him. Tarver was not easily hurt or offended. He had his reasons for clinging to Montague's society. Montague had plenty of money, and was very generous. He was good-natured and credulous to a fault; and Tarver had only to praise any thing in a way peculiar to himself—Montague would

instantly offer it; and then Tarver would assure his friend, "that he could not think of robbing him." These words quieted his conscience; and thanks, and expressions of satisfied delight, followed of course. But I would not speak thus lightly of Tarver's character. I must give a few serious words to him, and mention him no more, or as seldom as possible afterwards. Tarver was, in fact, one of those poor wretches—the thoughtless world say there are many—I hope, and think there are but few such—he was a hypocrite ! He had begun by deceiving himself, and (finding out his own wretched weakness when it was, he thought, too late to confess it), to satisfy his own pride—to keep up, by any means, the high profession he had held—he ended by deceiving others. I shall not mention the many little increasing meannesses by which he advanced in the path of crime ; the many pitiful excuses by which he soothed and satisfied his conscience at every step he took. I think that my readers cannot hear too little of the exposure of a religious hypocrite. The

thoughtless often suffer the holiness of religion itself to be degraded in their minds when a *human* professor proves false.

I have said that Montague was liberal : he was even careless about his money. Tarver has seen him throw notes of high value loose into a drawer, which was often left unlocked.

Montague had, at times, missed some of his money ; he half suspected his gyp, or his bed-maker, though he accused no one but himself for his own carelessness ; but at last the thief discovered himself. Montague could scarcely believe his eyes ; but Tarver was standing before the drawer,—the key was turning in one hand, some bank notes were crushed together in the other. Tarver's face was scarlet and of ashy paleness in a moment : he tried to rally ; and as Montague stood looking on him in speechless astonishment, something like a smile distorted the face of the poor wretch, and words of habitual deceit escaped from his lips. A look of indignant contempt flashed from the eyes of Montague full upon the convicted hypocrite ; but immediately it past away : the noble boy burst into an agony of

tears, and wept over the exposure of the guilty wretch, as if his heart would break. But as soon as he could, Montague recovered his self-possession: he wiped his eyes, and then locked both the outer and inner door of his rooms. Tarver augured well from Augustine's tears: he had gained time also to arrange his own thoughts; and before Montague could speak, he began in his smoothest voice.—Montague checked him at once, solemnly, and even sternly. "Let me not hear a word, sir!" he cried. "Do not, for God's sake, add the sin of lying to that which is already too evident! You are here alone with me," he said, in the same serious tone; "no one can at present disturb us. I feel more for you than for myself; and here I solemnly promise you never to mention what has happened—never from this moment."

Tarver's thanks were ready.

"No, sir," replied Montague; "I need no thanks. We must not meet again as we have done: I could not conceal my feelings. I am your friend still; but never again your companion."

Tarver had kept the notes in his closed hand: he now came up to Montague, and offered them.

"Oh! no, keep them, keep them," he said, with a hurried and trembling voice: "You must have needed money very much, or you could never have acted thus. Oh, why did you not tell me? You might have commanded my whole purse—any thing—any thing but what has happened! There is no use, however, in saying more on this subject." He unfastened the doors; and Tarver, his face bent towards the ground, but the bank notes still in his hand, departed.

"And this is religion!" thought Augustine to himself. "One had better be as openly profligate as Harrison, or any of those men whose habits I used to look upon with such abhorrence, than such a whited sepulchre as that poor sanctified wretch." Alas! it never occurred to him, that it was not necessary to run into one extreme, that the opposite extreme might be avoided. He began to associate religion and hypocrisy together in his mind; and while he inwardly deter-

mined to show that he was not a religious hypocrite, he saw no other way of doing so, than by adopting another, and much commoner sort of hypocrisy, that of pretending to be more profligate than he really was.

It happened, that there were few of Montague's intimate associates then in Cambridge. By his father's advice, he had remained in College to read during the Christmas vacation; yet he had scarcely opened a book. He had associated chiefly with Villiers and Lord William Lucas; but the latter went into Bedfordshire about the middle of the vacation, and Villiers, who was keeping his last term when Montague entered upon his first, had taken his degree a few days before the discovery of Tarver's guilt, and left the university. Montague was thrown into the society of Mr. Harrison, towards whom he had once taken a dislike. Harrison had some good qualities; though his harsh manner and unpleasant voice prejudiced many persons against him. He was sincere, and a staunch friend. Harrison had shown some kindness to Montague about a horse of his when it was

lame, and had been heard to say, "that he thought Montague one of the best riders in Cambridge;" and that same speech had come round to Montague. Such agreeable praise on a matter of such deep importance to a young man as his horsemanship, disposed Montague to a much kindlier spirit towards Harrison; and when a note came from him, soon after Tarver quitted Montague's rooms, to ask the latter to join in a shooting party the next morning, Augustine gladly shook off the gloomy reveries into which Tarver's conduct had thrown him, and went to answer the note in person. He found Harrison booted and spurred, and standing, with his hat and gloves on, before a large round of beef, part of which he had been devouring voraciously. "Come, my good fellow," he managed to say, though his mouth was crammed immoderately full, "Let me see you set to upon this beef. It's monstrous good, I promise you! I am just taking a farewell mouthful; though, to tell you the truth," he said gravely; "I had done luncheon; but it looked so very tempting, I could not resist tasting it again as

I passed. Do you like capsicums? Taste those: they are little enough, and look very green and cool; but they've a sting like a wasp: they came from my West India estates," he added, rather pompously. "What, you don't eat?—not well?—have a headache? Eh? What do you say to a canter over the hills, just for a little air? Eh? Not much need of air, either, this fine frosty weather?" He buttoned up his short drab surtout as he spoke.

Montague found the air of the hills so inspiriting, that his headache had left him before he returned home, and he was able to bear the noisy mirth of a select dinner party at Harrison's rooms. The select party was composed of a few very choice spirits. There was a famous whip, whose chief enjoyment was to pass the night three times in the week upon a coach box between London and Cambridge. He was a steady, sober, smooth-faced man, who had entered, heart and soul, into the mysteries of driving; and was too well used to the thing to make any display or pretension about it, but was civil, well-be-

haved, and silent: in short, those who judged only by his manner and appearance; his sleek hair, smoothed flat upon his forehead; the thick shawl about his neck; the breeches which reached half way down the calf of his leg; his white worsted stockings, and many other infallible signs, would have taken him for a very grave and decent stage coachman. There was a noisy and knowing Newmarket man, who was reported, young as he was, to have made much money by betting, or rather by hedging and calculating on the turf. There was an experienced boxer, who talked eloquently of his personal acquaintance with Tom Spring and Jack Randall, and gave the earliest information of all the battles that were to be fought in the next half year. He had seen one of his friends, a distinguished bruiser, in training at Wade's mill, but a few days before, which afforded a fund of conversation for him.

There was a stalwart, half-pay captain, who had renounced Bellona, and was come up to Cambridge to take mother church by storm. He was what is called "an eternal

proser," and detailed, most elaborately, his many discoveries and perceptions on many particularly unimportant subjects, which said discoveries and perceptions his hearers patiently sighed or smiled over as truisms and very old acquaintances. There was a long, lean, "sallow, sublime sort of Werter-faced man," who arranged his hair after the prints of Lord Byron, and talked in a sort of poetical prose, (which some persons thought nonsense;) and went off into raptures of enthusiasm about Lalla Rookh; and was said to be in love with a certain very fair, but rather frail actress; and he was silly enough, not only to wear, but to show a beautiful miniature of the said lady. And there was a little gentleman, with a delicate figure, and a pretty girlish face, who would have looked very feminine even in his sister's clothes; but who seemed determined to be a most awful personage. He strove to turn his childish tones into a big manly voice; and had a power of most terrible oaths and slang phrases at his tongue's end, and was, indeed, by his own account, so valiant a fellow, that he frequently reminded his compa-

nions that Tom Thumb had at last found a formidable rival.

With these choice companions Montague sat down to dinner, after standing and looking round in vain to see who was going to offer up grace. Harrison's wines were famous among his friends; and so much champagne was sent round that, before the cloth was removed, Montague's spirits were unusually elevated. The conversation shifted successively through various subjects, by which Montague, who was still comparatively a novice, was considerably edified. First the little gentleman with the girlish face, who was, occasionally, a very fine gentleman, made some general remarks about a new afterpiece which he had seen at Covent-Garden a few nights before.

"Afterpiece!" said the poetical-looking man, in a hollow measured voice, lifting up his long face from the wing of a chicken, which he was treating daintily. "Surely, you mean the pantomime; the last time any other sort of afterpiece was performed I was

present, and saw that lovely creature Miss —— in Maria Darlington.”

“By the by, Langdon,” cried Harrison, in a harsh deliberate tone, “when is your tragedy to come out? Is it to be at the Lane or the Garden?”

“It will not appear at present,” replied Langdon, solemnly; “Macready advises me not to offer it at present at either of the theatres. I am afraid it has too poetical a character for the present taste. It is suited rather for the closet than the stage. I must own, I should have felt truly gratified, could I have beheld that glorious creature Miss —— personating the creation of my humble pen.”

Here began a long dissertation on the acting of Miss —— in several characters, during which the dull eyes of her admirer, Mr. Langdon, lighted up from beneath the leathern lids, which usually like extinguishers half dropt over them. He spoke also, and the measured drawl of his voice became feeble with agitation, as his memory brought before him the scenes, in which the divine girl (so

he called her) had smiled or wept in her "purity and simple beauty," before some thousand spectators. The prosing captain took an opportunity, when the rest of the party were soon after loudly discussing the merits of Izzy Belasco, the bruiser, to entreat Langdon to give Montague a sight of the miniature, and Langdon drew it forth with a deep sigh, from some recess in his long narrow chest. Augustine was surprised and delighted at the young, fresh, and very beautiful face which he beheld, *apparently* the portrait of a girl as modest as she was lovely; and, in his simplicity, he half believed the original to be deserving of all the praise which had been lavished upon her.

But it was not my intention to write a detailed account of this portion of Augustine's life. I have said almost enough about Harrison's dinner-party! I will only add, that after drinking, and talking, till nearly eleven o'clock, four of the party sat down to cards; two stationed themselves beside the players, to bet upon the game; another fell fast asleep; and Montague amused himself by looking

over a heavy-looking, and heavy-reading volume, entitled "Life in London." Milk-punch appeared to finish the evening, and poor Montague, after appearing in quite a new character, and singing, and laughing, and crying by turns like a madman; and struggling and offering to fight as he went along, was supported by two veterans, well used to drinking, to his own rooms, and, for the first time, undressed and put to bed by them. In the night he was dreadfully sick; and Langdon, whose rooms were those adjoining Montague's, heard him weeping and bewailing himself most dolefully, and uttering many vows of penitence; but he could also distinguish other sounds, which led him to conclude that the wine, which he had drank, was acting as a violent emetic, and he had no doubt he would soon be relieved in spirits as well as stomach. Langdon was too indolent, and too selfish to leave his own warm bed, and attend to his neighbour; and Montague did, as he expected, soon fall into a sound sleep, from which he was only roused by Harrison, who came to remind him of his promise to join the shooting

party. Montague seemed at first unwilling to go with him, but Harrison declared that nothing would do him so much good as walking over ploughed fields, in the bracing air, that it would make him quite another man; and accordingly Montague went.

The next evening, Montague drove in a tandem to the Huntingdon Ball; and a few days after he stole a visit to London with Langdon, that they might just take a peep at the play and the opera.

No novice in profligacy need serve a long apprenticeship. With plenty of money he may soon become fully initiated. Augustine Montague was soon as *knowing* as any of his young companions, and he settled indeed into habits quite as riotous and extravagant. The Spring was now fast approaching, and Montague began, at times, to look forward with dread to the Easter vacation, when he had promised to spend a fortnight with his parents. His father, with the fullest confidence in him, had given him leave to use his own discretion, and spend whatever money he might find necessary. He had been touched at first, deeply

touched, by such a proof of his father's confidence, and had resolved to prove himself worthy of it; but the times of trial and temptation had arrived, and his resolutions were quite forgotten. He did not dare calculate his debts. As to his altered sentiments on religion, Augustine wilfully turned his thoughts from them, for he could not bear to anticipate what might be their effect upon Sir George and Lady Montague.

CHAPTER VI.

AUGUSTINE's feelings were not unlike those of a condemned felon, who is respited, when about a week before Easter he received a letter from his mother, informing him, that as Easter fell very late that year, and as a few weeks only would elapse between the end of the Easter vacation, and the examination of the undergraduates at Trinity College, Mr. Cramp and his father both thought that his return home had better be deferred till the long vacation. "You will thereby be enabled," she added, "to keep your mind free from all distractions, and to be well prepared in every respect when the examination commences, in which we are anxious to hear that you have distinguished yourself."

Augustine remained at Cambridge. The time fixed for the examination arrived. He waited to see his name in the classes, and felt confounded for a few moments when he saw his name in the seventh class. Others came also into the hall to look for their names, and

Augustine put on a look of perfect unconcern, whistled, not for want of care, and walked away.

At the commencement of the long vacation, Augustine returned home. He entered the well-known hall of his father's house, in a state of sullen apathy; and scarcely noticed the servant, who respectfully saluted him as he opened the door. He heard his mother utter a cry of joy, and saw her rush forward to meet him—her usual made-up manner quite overcome with delight at beholding him again. His heart was softened; so that when his father came in, he had nearly given way to his feelings, and wept aloud. Angry, and ashamed at his weakness, he struggled with himself, and did not betray his agitation.

At first he determined to avow the change in his opinions openly; but he soon perceived that he should then only add an unnecessary pang to the disappointment of his parents. He took another course, and said nothing.

He conformed in his outward manner to the customs of the family; and listened with constrained attention to the conversation of

those around him, when they addressed him. But he now missed the amusements and dissipations which he was accustomed to at Cambridge; and being thus thrown upon himself, hardly an hour in the day passed but left him more wretched and dispirited. He looked in vain, however, for relief. His eyes were opened to all the absurdities of his family; their narrowness of mind; their spiritual pride, and the great want of *Christian charity*, which was so often lost sight of, in warm discussions about *Christian faith*. No fault of his parents now escaped the notice of Augustine, and he wondered at his former blindness; and looked back upon his former self with contempt; till he found great difficulty in forcing himself to treat them with that outward respect which he had never failed to keep up towards them. He sometimes gave way to the temptation which he felt to express his own opinion, when any thing was said particularly offensive to him. And thus he dragged on his cheerless existence, till at length the day of his return to Cambridge drew near, and he began to rejoice

that he should be able to escape from the home where he had once been so happy.

At breakfast, the morning before his intended departure, he announced his intention of going to Cambridge, to his father and mother.

"Going whither, Augustine?" his mother cried out, with a stare of unfeigned surprise.

"To Cambridge," he answered, drily: "I must set off to-morrow."

"And I must beg you will not. Pray, Sir George, desire Augustine to wait. I have quite set my heart on his being present at the missionary meeting on Thursday."

"And our lectures begin on Wednesday," replied her son.

"But, I am sure, your lectures are not of half the importance of the missionary meeting. I dare say you would be excused for a few days: do you not think so, Sir George?"

"Certainly, my dear! I should like Augustine to stay, but he is right to think about the lectures."

"Dear, Sir George, how strange you are! I don't understand your way of reasoning:—

it is right for him to stay, and it is right for him to go! I am sorry that I said any thing about *my* wishes."

"I really do not quite comprehend what I can have said to annoy you so excessively, Lady Montague! *You* are, allow *me* to say so, strange in *your* manner this morning."

"I suppose," said the lady, very pettishly, "you are both of opinion that the missionary meeting is to be neglected for these school-boy lectures. Now, I must say, that *I* think it decidedly wrong for Augustine to *turn his back* upon the missionary meeting."

"But will you tell me," said the young gentleman, very coolly, "why my presence is so necessary?"

"Why! you should be there to—to——"

"Not to make a speech, I hope," said Augustine, "for really that is quite out of the question."

"No, not to make a speech, but to—to show yourself an advocate of the cause, and to listen to the useful information which may be gained there."

Augustine was not apt to be impertinent,

but now something like a smile hovered for a moment about his upper lip, and his only answer was a sound very like "Hem !"

"Very well, sir!" said his mother, in a tone of peculiar bitterness: "I see that you have learned to sneer at these subjects. Your college life has done you much good, certainly! I remember the time when you used to consider it a delight, and a privilege, to be allowed to attend a missionary meeting. Thank you, sir, for your sneer; you are certainly much improved since you have left us: at least you seem to be so in your own eyes; for, I must confess, that though you are grown considerably taller, I think you are altered very much for the worse. But if you were as high as the house, sir, I should still take the liberty of speaking my mind."

"I am sure I should be very sorry to prevent you," he began.

"You never *will* prevent me, I assure you," she said emphatically; "and now an opportunity has occurred, I must tell you, that I have remarked your sullen and haughty looks of late; and I should wish, now your

father is present, to learn what has occasioned them. To tell you the truth, Sir George, I am sorry that I spoke so warmly to you, for I did not mean what I said of you: I was hurt and grieved, not so much by any thing that was said, as by Augustine's looks. All this morning, there has been the same expression on his face: nay, all the time he has been at home, since his return from Cambridge. I am not blind; I do not need words to tell *me* when any thing is amiss. Pray, Sir George, take some notice of this conduct—I beg it may be explained."

During the latter part of her long speech, Lady Montague had addressed herself to Sir George as exclusively as if her son had not been in the room. Sir George turned languidly, first to his wife, and then to his son, and said, "I trust, Augustine, that you did not intend to be impertinent to your mother."

"No, sir! I am sure I beg my mother's pardon, if I seemed so."

"And you will stay over this missionary meeting?"

"Oh, certainly, sir! whatever you, or my

mother desire, I must do. I will write immediately to say, that I need not be expected at my rooms till next Monday."

"But the explanation! there has been no explanation, Sir George!" cried the lady, as her son lounged out of the room: "I'm not satisfied with his apologies,—I want to find out the cause of this change in Augustine. He has no enjoyment in any of his former pursuits. Do insist on his giving some explanation."

Sir George made his usual reply. "Certainly, my dear, if you wish it."

"If I wish it! what an answer! you know I do. I see by your face that you are scarcely attending to a word I say."

But here, Sir George, who was justice of peace, was called away on some particular and pressing business, and he escaped with delight; leaving his lady still vehement in the assertion of her own opinions, and declaring that she should consult with Mr. Cramp how to treat her insufferable son.

After the missionary meeting was over, many of the persons who had been present

adjourned to Sir George Montague's house, where a cold collation was laid out.

Much social cheerfulness prevailed during the feast: but the cloth was scarcely removed, when a murmur ran round the table, that Mr. Cramp and a Mr. R—— were going to converse. A hushed silence instantly prevailed, and the conversation was begun by Mr. R——, who happened to sit at the farthest possible end of the table from Mr. Cramp.

“ Pray, Mr. Cramp, what is your opinion of the doctrine of final perseverance ? ”

This happened to be a point on which Mr. Cramp entertained very peculiar, and, I may say, unscriptural opinions. Augustine saw, that as soon as Mr. Cramp began to speak, his father cast at him a beseeching look; and he determined to show that he understood and obeyed it. He turned towards the speaker with serious attention. But what was his astonishment, when, after proceeding for some time in a very unintelligible strain, Mr. Cramp turned at once from his subject, and began a solemn attack upon a person, whom he gave them to understand was not

far distant. Augustine was puzzling himself to discover whom he could allude to, when he heard words repeated, which he remembered to have used himself the day before. He looked round, and saw that many eyes were fixed on him. The attack of Mr. Cramp was ill-timed and illiberal in no common degree. It had the worst effect on the person it was intended to reform. Augustine rose up, his face burning with rage, and looking round very haughtily, muttered: "D—d fool!" and at once quitted the table, and the room. He walked hastily into the garden, and finding the river which flowed through the grounds, and his boat before him, he leaped into the boat; and continued rowing with all his might, till he was far from his home. But as his body became heated and fatigued by the exercise, his mind cooled; and laying down the oars, he suffered the boat to float quietly down the sluggish river. He sunk into a train of serious and unpleasant thoughts, from which he was suddenly startled by a stone, which struck him with violence on the face. He looked round, very angry at the blow, and

saw a boy standing on the bank, and laughing insolently at him. Augustine threatened to land and thrash him; but the boy only laughed more loudly; and, catching up another stone, quickly climbed a tree which hung over the stream. Before, however, the laughing boy could fling that other stone, his foot slipped, and he fell into the deep dark water beneath.

Augustine hesitated not a moment; but throwing off his coat, he plunged into the stream. He was not an expert swimmer, and the drowning boy clung so closely round his neck, that with much difficulty he reached the shore. The boy hung his head, and muttering his thanks in a few words, stole away, Augustine heeded him not, but ran farther down along the bank of the stream to get possession of his boat, which he perceived had drifted against the low branches of an alder. He was soon after accosted by a young woman, who wept while she thanked him for saving her brother's life, and who begged him to go back with her to her home, and dry his clothes, for they were dripping with wet. Augustine followed her; and at the

back of a low hill, not fifty yards from the river, he beheld a small cottage.

“ My poor mother is in a very low way, sir !” said the girl, as they approached the house. “ What with my father’s death, (we buried him only last week), and what with brother Richard’s idleness, and undutiful behaviour, she has sometimes hardly the heart to lift her head up. Perhaps you’ll say a word to her before you take your leave, for you seem a kind gentleman, and I dare say you are a fine scholar. None of us can read, sir ; but here is father’s Bible, and perhaps you will read to my mother ?”

He hesitated ; but the girl put the Bible into his hands, and the mother looked up so mournfully and imploringly, that he opened the sacred book, and read part of a chapter of St. John’s Gospel. His heart warmed, and his feelings became interested as he read. He found himself, before he was aware, explaining and enforcing the words of life, as he had heard others do, before he left home for Cambridge. When he rose up to depart, the blessings and thanks of the mother and

daughter followed him ; and he returned home in a more softened and serious frame of mind than he had been in for many months. He was crossing the hall, on his way to his own apartment, when the butler passed him.

“ Master Augustine !” he said, “ why, where have you been ? We have been looking every where for you. Pray make haste, for I have just carried the hymn-books into the drawing-room, and Mr. R—— is going to expound a chapter before prayers.”

The old man continued speaking ; but Augustine had turned away ; and hastening to his own dressing-room, he banged to the door, and locked himself in ; fastening also the outer door of his bedchamber, which was the adjoining room.

“ Still this mummary !” he said, contemptuously. “ I am sick of their hymn-drawling; and their expoundings. I hate their long faces almost as much as their forced mirth ! I go down and join in their cant ? Indeed I shall not !”

He threw himself into an arm chair, and

gave way to a fit of thorough ill humour. He felt discontented with every one and every thing ; but was, in fact, though he knew it not, most discontented with himself. There he sat in the arm chair, lost in that idleness of thought which is not worthy to be called thinking. He did not rise, till he heard the bolt of his door turned, and his mother's voice calling on him to unlock the door and admit her. He was about to obey, when he distinguished another voice besides that of his mother.

“ Pray excuse my opening the door to-night,” he said ; “ I'm tired, and shall be soon in bed.”

He heard, soon after, the door of his bed-chamber tried ; and then his mother's voice was raised to a higher key, insisting to be admitted instantly. He opened the door ; and having done so, proudly and sullenly walked away from it.

“ Oh ! come in, sir,” cried Lady Montague ; and when Augustine turned his head, Mr. Cramp stood beside his mother. “ You are,

of course, fully aware of the reason of this visit," said the lady. "Your conduct, this day, has been most extraordinary and shameless; and this truly excellent man (after much consideration) has determined that it would not be right to pass over the indignity you so wantonly put upon him, and upon our holy religion. We are, therefore, come to desire that you will return instantly with us to the assembly of our friends below, and there ask pardon for the grievous offence, which, being committed in public, calls also for a public apology."

Augustine stared with astonishment at his mother; and his face glowed with hot and angry blushes; but he answered not a word.

"You are ashamed," she continued; "and, doubtless, you mourn over your sin; and I am sorry that you should have brought so much guilt upon your head; but my feelings are also deeply wounded. I see the justice of the decision to which my friend hath come; and, therefore, cannot consent to your disobeying his request."

Lady Montague walked towards the door,

but seeing that her son did not follow her, she turned, and commanded him to do so.

"I am very sorry," he said, "not to be able to obey; but, in this instance, I cannot. I am not sorry I spoke so sharply to this gentleman. The apology is rather required on his side; for, upon my word, I should like to know what he meant by his impertinent and public attack upon me."

Lady Montague lifted up her hands and eyes in mute amazement; and Mr. Cramp began a long and violent rebuke; to which Augustine made no reply, but looked him in the face and smiled.

"This is past all endurance," exclaimed Lady Montague in a rage. "Have you not the slightest reverence for your mother, and your tutor? You seem to forget even common decency."

"*Your* commands I would willingly obey, ma'am," said Augustine, "for you are my mother; but, as for Mr. Cramp, I tell him, positively, I will not submit to his interference any longer. I have borne it too long; for it required much to open my eyes to

him. But, sir, I must now beg you to remember, that I am no longer a child, and that you are no longer my tutor."

Lady Montague now trembled with passion, and Mr. Cramp turned deadly pale. Much more was said on both sides, which need not be repeated: and at last Augustine was left alone. His mother, probably, little guessed the real state of his mind that evening. A very few minutes had elapsed after her departure, when, having again locked the door of his apartment, he flung himself upon his bed, and gave way to an uncontrollable burst of grief. Never had he felt so perfectly miserable.

"What am I," he said sternly to himself, "that I should take upon me to speak to others as I have been speaking? What are their faults? Bigotry—an over-scrupulous strictness. They are narrow-minded and uncharitable! But, oh, God! what am I?"

CHAPTER VII.

AUGUSTINE returned to Cambridge; and he half determined to shun his idle companions, and give up his profligate ways: but half determinations, we all know, are useless; and finding it very dull to be alone, or to be obliged to think, he soon relapsed into his former habits. Sir George Montague had, of course, settled the regular accounts presented by the college tutor; and the various sums he had drawn upon his father, although to a very high amount, had been paid by Sir George without a remark. But soon after Augustine's return to Cambridge, bills without number were brought in; and he was panic struck. He knew nothing of the value of money, nor of the prices of the many things which he had thoughtlessly purchased. He had not restrained himself in any expense; and the consequence of his improvidence were debts to an amount almost incredible. He had just made a rough calculation of the

amount, when his servant came to tell him that his horse was waiting for him. Augustine suddenly recollected an engagement to ride to a coursing match, and, thrusting the bills into a drawer which he locked, he flung himself on his horse, and forgot, for a while his troubles. That day, he dined tête-à-tête with Harrison, at the Eagle; and was unusually serious.

"Do tell me, my dear fellow," said the latter, after staring at him for some minutes, "what makes you so confoundedly down in the mouth to-day? Have you lost your heart to some pretty shop-girl? or has your governor sent you a rowing letter?"

"Oh! nothing, nothing is the matter," replied Augustine, forcing a laugh, and filling, and drinking down a bumper of wine. "What should be the matter, Eh! old fellow?" and he gave himself a sort of inward shake, and began to talk gaily, but at random. His forced mirth would not last; and again his companion rallied him on his dull abstraction.

“Why, Montague, man! you remind me of that first time when I met you at Tracey’s rooms, and you were so gloriously fresh, that you were afraid of a bottle, and left your heel-taps. You are not in my case, I trust,” and he laughed, and then put his hands into his pockets with an affected look of despair, “with empty pockets, and bills which must be paid.”

“Indeed, but I am,” replied Augustine, resolving suddenly to make Harrison his confidant. “I had not the slightest idea of the number of bills which have been brought in to me; nor of the sum of money which will be required to pay them. How they are to be paid, I know not; for I can never have the face to ask my father for the money.”

“Why, how much is it?”

Montague named the sum.

“Why, no; you can’t exactly ask for all just at present;” and Harrison also looked grave, and seemed to consider.

“Had I not better,” Montague said, at length, (though he hesitated as he continued)

"tell my father all my difficulties? He is always very kind, and the most liberal person I ever met with, as to money?"

"But you said the amount was at least £1000?"

"O yes! so I did: no, I never can tell him. If he were harsh and avaricious, I should not so much mind the blame which I deserve from him; but I came up here determined not to abuse the confidence he placed in me."

"All very true, and very fine, I dare say; though I have not heard much that you have been saying, old boy! I have been considering what sort of a plan this might be," and he pointed to an advertisement in a newspaper which he had been conning over.

"Money lent on any security!" cried Montague, delighted.

He had never heard of money-lenders; and he listened eagerly while the more experienced Harrison endeavoured to explain what he called *the advantages* of the plan.

"Well, I cannot quite comprehend it," said Montague, when Harrison rose to keep an engagement.

"I'll tell you what," replied his companion, "I know a man who has often paid a visit to these money-lenders. He will be in college in a week or two, and I can consult with him. Then we can talk over this plan, and decide upon something : in the meantime you might draw on your governor for as much money as you can demand without drawing down his vengeance. The other bills may wait."

Augustine was glad to delay the pain of thinking about his bills ; and he allowed himself also to defer writing on the subject to his father till Harrison should have seen the friend he spoke of. In the mean time, he shut his eyes most resolutely against the necessity of a strict retrenchment in his expenses. He certainly did once or twice say to himself, that when his bills were once paid he would be a very economical person : "but what does it signify," his foolish inclination whispered, "whether I owe a few pounds more or less than the sum which I already owe?" Inclination was a Syren to whom Augustine had been lately accustomed to

listen very often: her false reasonings were effective; and the thoughtless boy continued to keep the same society, and to indulge in all those extravagant excesses which had hitherto enslaved him. Nay, he plunged deeper and deeper in folly and sin; for, in this life, there is no standing still in our course. We must either go on in the broad way, which those who love the pomps and vanities of this wicked world follow, or we must proceed onward along the narrow way that leadeth unto eternal life.

I shall not disgust some, and gratify others of my readers, by detailing more of the incidents in Augustine's course of profligacy. I have said enough to weary myself.

It was a dull, raw morning in January that a young and hard-reading student, who had remained in college during the Christmas vacation, was returning from his early morning walk along the Huntingdon Road. He was accustomed to force himself to walk at that hour for exercise, though he was in a very delicate state of health. A heavy rain began to fall,

and drove him homewards. As he walked hastily on, his eye was attracted by something lying under the hedge on the opposite side of the road. He crossed over, and beheld a human body stretched out, but half hidden among the low bushes. The figure was lying with its face towards the earth ; and, for a moment, he drew back, for the horrid thought crossed him, that some one had been murdered on the spot. He stooped down, however, and gently raised the body, and soon, to his joy, discovered, that the person, who lay in his arms, was neither murdered, nor dead. He had, alas ! been only dead-drunk, and had lain in a heavy sleep for some few hours, after wandering away from a debauch, which had not broken up till long after midnight. The young student brushed away the dead leaves, which had fallen thickly over the hair of the youth, and as he gazed upon the features before him, he had a confused recollection that he had seen them before, where, he could not at first remember. The youth awoke, and, assisted by the kind arm of his supporter, rose up. A deep

blush spread over his thin and pallid face, as he replied to the kind and anxious enquiries which were addressed to him.

"I am very sorry," he said, with a constrained manner, "that you should meet me again as you now meet me."

"I beg your pardon," replied his companion: "but I cannot say that I recollect your name, though I think I have seen you before."

Augustine, for it was he, mentioned where they had met, and declared whom he was.

"Yes, I perfectly remember now," replied Temple; "but you are sadly altered in a little time—you have been very ill, I fear, since we last met?"

"No, I have not been *ill*," said Montague, in a low voice.

They walked together towards the backs of the Colleges, and for some minutes neither of them spoke. Montague was the first to break the silence.

"I should be sorry to part with you," he said, "without frankly confessing that I am heartily ashamed of myself. You have, per-

haps, saved my life; for I now feel so cold and ill, that if I had lain there much longer, it is not improbable that they might have found only a corpse.—Good God! from what a dreadful punishment have I been saved!” He broke off suddenly here, and, grasping Temple’s hand, turned away towards the iron gates of his own college. Yet ere he turned, Temple remarked to himself, that he had seldom seen an expression of such bitter wretchedness on any countenance. He stood still for some moments on the spot where he had parted from Montague, and then hastened after him.

“I was very thoughtless,” he said, “not to offer to accompany you (unwell as you are) to your rooms.”

There was so much real affectionate feeling in the tone with which Temple pronounced these words, that Montague felt certain a friend was speaking.

“How kind you are!” he replied, and Temple saw that tears were in his eyes.

For some days Montague was too unwell to leave his rooms. Temple saw by his friend’s

manner, that his society was agreeable; and he became Montague's constant visitor.

"Do not go away when others call on me," said Augustine to Temple one morning; "do not go away unless you dislike their society: but perhaps you do; for their tastes and habits are, I suspect, very different from your own."

"I care little whether I meet them or not in so casual a way," said Temple. "My reason for going away is simply because I know *they* are your friends, and that I fear, (now I am so frequently in your rooms) lest you should ever feel me in the way."

"You in the way! My dear kind Temple, how can you say so? And as for friends, I used to think them so, till I knew you. You have spoilt me for their friendship. I begin to know what a friend is! I wish I had known you before, Temple, for I might have been saved much misery."

"I believe that few understand what real friendship is," replied Temple: "we are all ready to talk about friendship, but we are often satisfied with only the name."

“ Will you be my friend, Temple ?”

“ Will you take a bitter medicine, Montague ?”

“ Why do you ask so strange a question, instead of giving me an answer ?”

“ Because ‘ a faithful friend is the medicine of life:’ and I fear that you might find my friendship somewhat unpleasant to bear with.”

“ But I am sick, not only in body but in soul, and need medicine,” replied Augustine.

“ Then on such terms you will take my friendship ?” said Temple.

“ I will, and thank you heartily.”

“ I must hear then,” said Temple, and a smile of peculiar archness played over his countenance ; “ I must hear from my patient his own account of his case, his own opinion of his health.”

“ You shall have it in earnest, my friend ;” and Montague clasped his hand, while his looks expressed deep mental suffering. “ But what am I to tell you ? what can I confess ? what have I to describe, but a dull and dreary indifference to every thing, an utter carelessness and deadness, which indeed I know not

how to describe? Till very lately, till after that fearful morning when our friendship began, I had been reckless as to what became of me—I had but one object before me, I made but one effort, and that was, not to think.”

“And were you ever happy?” enquired Temple.

“No, not happy—certainly not happy! I have found a feverish kind of enjoyment in the excesses to which I willingly yielded, but they were always succeeded by a thorough sickness of heart, a disrelish for every thing without excitement.”

“But why not,” exclaimed Temple, “why not make a determined and vigorous exertion, and free yourself at once?”

“Oh! I don’t know—I could not—they were *habits*—they seemed necessary to me—they were part of myself. I told you that I did all I could to banish thought. It was easier to yield than to think; and every time I yielded, the habit twined itself more closely round me, and fixed me down more firmly in the bondage of sin!”

"But did you never pray for divine help?" cried Temple.

"O no! prayer would have been but a mockery from one so debased as myself. I tell you the truth (though you will grieve to hear it) when I confess that I have neither breathed a thought in prayer, nor once opened the Holy Bible, for many months."

"But now, you surely have returned to prayer and to the Scriptures!"

"I have not," replied he, "nor can I. It would be hypocrisy in me, for, I own, that I am still but little changed. My sins have still, as it were, many mouths—they still crave to be satisfied; and I am still so wretched a slave that I cannot attempt to get free."

"You do not mean, surely, that you are still unresolved about the change of life, which I so anxiously desire to see."

"Indeed but I do," said Montague. "I certainly have, at times, a wish to be changed, but I cannot be what you wish me at present. Some little time hence I may take courage to begin."

"Nay, but you must begin instantly!" ex-

claimed Temple, with much warmth. "If you hesitate, you only increase the difficulty. I know that you have not a very easy work before you; but if, with prayer and constant watching, you will only resolutely determine, and begin at once to walk in a new way, every step you take will become easier than the last. I would also remind you, that you must not be daunted, if your new resolutions fail sometimes under the force of your present habits; for a habit when opposed to a resolution is as a host against *one*. A habit must be opposed by a habit, not by a mere resolution. Go on stedfastly and gradually resisting evil. Acquire the habit of resisting without yielding, and, in the midst of your trial of pain and patience, you will suddenly find that a bad habit has been rooted out, and a good one planted in its stead."

"Yes, all this may be very true," replied Montague, "but I frankly confess, I have not courage enough to bear up under the mortification of such constant self-denial."

"You have courage and manly resolution even in trifles, Montague; and can you so

debase yourself as to shrink from the noble daring which your highest interests require of you? But you are, indeed, grossly mistaken if you imagine that your exertions would be without encouragements. Numberless are the encouragements which come cheering and refreshing the mind, when the sinner has resolutely set forth to seek his father's face, and confess his unworthiness, his guilt, his utter helplessness. Your feet may have to struggle through dark and rough ways, beset with perplexing snares; but there is a sunshine ever bright and gladdening overhead. When the poor prodigal drew near to his father, he found that his tender parent had seen him afar off, and had had compassion on him. And his father did not wait to be gracious then, but ran and fell upon his neck, and kissed him."

In a former conversation Montague had spoken of his bills to Temple, and his friend's advice had been to write without reserve to his father, to confess every thing. They had even made out a correct list of the bills; but Montague still delayed to send it off, and it lay in his writing-case neglected, though not

forgotten. In vain did Temple now urge him on this point. The subject became almost a source of disputes between them; for Temple's friendship was full of faithfulness and truth.

Temple's heart had sunk within him when he discovered the lamentable weakness and irresolution, even of purpose, by which Augustine was still enslaved. He had been hoping for some days that his friend had set about a reform in good earnest, and his hopes had been greatly raised at the beginning of that conversation; but they had been raised only to fall much lower. He had the best interests of his friend deep at heart; but he saw that he had been speaking to little purpose. "I will go home," thought Temple to himself, as, too much affected to speak, he offered his hand to Montague, and left him. "I will go home and pray for him: I have been presumptuous in hoping that my words would change him. A higher and holier power is needed for the work; but I *had* hoped, had prayed, to be the blessed means."

CHAPTER VIII.

FOR a few days after their last conversation Montague neither saw nor heard of Temple. He wondered, but did not take the trouble of asking the reason. His health was quite restored, and with returning health the desire to follow his own evil ways also returned. He was, however, much mistaken in supposing that he had become utterly indifferent to every thing. His indifference was only confined to the inner man; for he paid more than usual attention to every thing connected with his outward appearance.

One morning he was in a very ill-humour, having woke with a head-ach, the effects of drinking too much bad wine at an inn dinner the evening before. His * gyp entered the room. " You may pick up those things," he said to the man, (carelessly pointing to a heap of clean neckcloths, which he had purposely

* Perhaps I ought to explain that a gyp is a college servant. The derivation of the word is the Greek for a vulture.—C.

tumbled, and thrown upon the floor); "and tell that d—d fool, my washerwoman, that she deserves to have her head broken for sending me such a set of *cloths*: they are as stiff as paste-board, and folded half an inch too broad."

"Very well, sir!" replied the gyp, coolly taking up the neckcloths. "I called this morning for the parcel you expected by the mail; but there's nothing come."

"Nothing come!" cried Montague, starting. "Why, then, I have no coat to go out in this morning! What an infernal ass that Stultz is!"

"No coat, sir!" exclaimed the gyp, staring with astonishment; "why, there's your blue surtout, and your green duck-hunter, and your brown coat, and two or three black and blue coats."

Augustine heeded him not: he was no hero to his valet-de-chambre; nay, he was accustomed to expose himself before his gyp and his servant, by the display of a violence of temper, which would have been ridiculous, had it not been pitiable. Indifferent, he fancied himself to *every thing*! he was

strangely mistaken. An ill-folded neckcloth, an ill-made coat, a tight boot, could make him storm and rave with passion; and yet he had once been remarkable for a kindness of manner, that was almost courteous, towards servants. He was in the act of pacing his room, muttering his curses on those who had crossed him in the weighty affair of dress, when a gentle tap at his door attracted his attention: it had been repeated several times.

"Come in," he cried, in a voice of thunder; and a quiet little old woman entered. "Well! what do *you* want?" he said.

"I've a little note for you, if you are Mr. Montague, sir."

"Well! put it down. Put it on that table, can't you?"

The woman did so; but she still remained at the door. "Is there no answer?" she said, humbly: "if there be, I'll wait, if you please; for my master, poor young gentleman! is very ill."

"Who is your master? Who are you?" he cried, hastily snatching up the note.

" My master is Mr. Temple, of Queen's, sir. I thought you knew him quite well."

This was the note :

" I am, I fear, very ill, my dear friend—too ill to leave my rooms. If you are well enough, will you have pity upon me, and give me the pleasure of your company for a short time? Yours, very faithfully,

" W. E. TEMPLE."

" Tell him," said Augustine to the old woman (his voice and manner were quite changed), " tell Mr. Temple that I will—what am I saying?—I shall be with him long before you;" and he rushed out of the room.

When he saw Temple, hope died within him. A few days had made a fearful alteration. Temple was sitting up, supporting his head upon his hand, and leaning over a book which lay upon the table before him. He looked round when Augustine entered, and as he recognized his beloved friend, a rich but hectic flush dyed his hollow cheeks; and his large, and usually bright eye, filled with tears.

" You are very kind to come so soon," he said, in a voice scarcely louder than a whis-

per ; and he held out his thin trembling hand, and shook hands with his friend.

“ I had no idea of this ! ” exclaimed Augustine, faintly. “ How long have you been ill ? ”

“ Oh ! a long time, dear Montague. This disease has been stealing upon me for months ; but I did not feel myself in danger till a few days ago.”

“ But you are not in danger ! you cannot be in danger ! ”

“ Indeed I am,” replied Temple, calmly ; “ I cannot hope to recover. My physician has been very kind. I begged him to tell me the truth ; and he then declared that nothing less than a miracle could save me. I thank God that I am becoming daily more reconciled to my lot. For years I have not closed mine eyes at night without praying, that I might be found preparing, and in some manner prepared for death, at whatever hour my call should come : but now I feel an awful difference between the preparation of my poor, imperfect prayers, and the preparation which the body is ordained to feel when the reality of the presence of death arrives. I suffer

little pain, but am at times almost exhausted with faintness and languor."

"I will remain with you," said Augustine; "if I do not disturb you; but you were reading when I entered;" and Augustine's glance turned towards the book which lay open on the table.

"Yes, I was reading, but you will not disturb me, my kind friend." Then looking down towards the book, he said, "It is the best book! I read no other now: I have often thought how happy poor Collins* must have been, when he put aside every other book, and made a New Testament his only companion. I *feel* now what such happiness is."

For some little time Temple did not speak again. He leaned back in his chair, and closed his eyes, and pressed his hands over the lids, as if the eye-balls ached. Then, insensibly, he fell into a gentle slumber. He woke smiling, and extended his hand to Augustine.

"I have been dreaming about you," he said, "my dear, dear friend! I never found

* The Poet.

a friend after my own heart till I knew you. It is a consolation for me to feel, that if I cannot enjoy your friendship longer on earth, my death may be of service to you."

"How! I do not understand you, Temple. Pray do not speak thus."

"My words have a very simple meaning," he replied. "It is good for you, dear Montague, to be with a dying friend. You need to be moved out of the vain world, and out of yourself. I can say many things to you now (which, had I been in health), I might have feared to speak. Oh! I shall indeed rejoice, I trust, among the angels of God, if my words, now that I am dying, have that power given to them, which they possessed not till now. You know that I am in sad earnest now. Promise me,—say that you do promise me, that you will seek Jesus Christ, as your Saviour from sin here! Ah! if you do not, you will never find Him as your Saviour from eternal misery hereafter. He who is long-suffering and full of compassion to the weakest and vilest sinner, if He is sought as the Saviour *here*, will appear here—

after to those who have not sought Him thus, as the Judge to whom vengeance belongeth. The words He now uses are, 'Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden with the burden of your sins, and I will give you rest.' The words He will use to the wicked on His great and awful day will be, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!' I know, my own friend, that it is a difficult work to return from sinning unto holiness; but you must prepare manfully, and like a soldier of Christ, for the combat in which you must engage. And to a noble mind, methinks, there is something inspiring in the mere thought. There is an idea of Latimer's, 'honest Hugh Latimer,' as he was called, which I wish you to bear in mind: I do not recollect the words, but they are to this purport, 'That our great adversary takes little trouble, when he tempts those who live in the common practice and daily habit of sin. A little temptation will keep them his: he holds them in his power, by throwing his baubles and playthings before them. But

when a person sets about a reform, a thorough reform of his heart and soul and mind, of his whole man, in deep, sad earnest—when a man sets his face steadfastly to do God's will in despite of every hindrance—it is then that the devil brings forth all his choicest lures and most winning baits from the treasure-house of his temptations, and leaves no way untried to force him into the bondage of his hellish chains.’”

The next day Augustine was with his friend at an early hour. He found him very cheerful.

“ My physician has just been with me,” he said, “ and he has consented to what was almost my last wish. I long to see my own dear father and mother, and my darling sister, once more, before I go to their home, and I trust my home also, above. I shall leave Cambridge to-morrow, and set off for my native village of Thursley. I know that this is a hazardous journey, my dear friend, and that I may sink under the fatigue of it; but my medical friend assures me that my remaining here can be of no service to me—nay, that change of air, if I have strength to

bear the journey, may add a few weeks and even months to my life. I cannot help it, but I assure you I am full of hope as to the effect which my native air may have on my complaint. I begin to be restless and uneasy while I remain here. Will you (I ask it as a favour, the last I may be able to ask) will you take so troublesome a charge, and set off with me to-morrow? I am hardly strong enough to undertake the journey by myself; and too poor to keep a servant. Will you arrange every thing, and pay the expenses out of my purse? And in case,"—here his voice faltered, but he soon recovered himself, and continued, "Why should I not speak of what is but too probable? In case I should not reach home alive, will you break the sad tidings to my poor father?"

A few tears fell from his eyes as he said this, and Augustine could no longer command his feelings. They both wept in silence for some minutes. Temple was soon calm, and spoke in a firmer and quieter voice than before.

"No," he said, thoughtfully, "not to my father, for he is ill, too ill to travel; no, nor

to my poor mother : but dear Montague, go to the house, and ask for my sister. I can depend on her."

It was after he had made this very serious request, that Temple said, " My dear Montague, shall I offend if I ask a favour of you now ?"

" Oh ! no: how can you suspect me of being such a brute? Tell me what I can do."

" Those bills of yours !" replied Temple, timidly—" that list ! will you write to your father and send it ?"

" My own friend !" exclaimed Montague, gravely, " I will really attend to those bills : but only let me see you safely arrived at your father's house : only wait till then—indeed I will."

Temple answered not but by a mournful smile.

Augustine found no difficulty in obtaining an ' exeat,' that he might take the charge of his beloved friend ; and together they set off for the little village of Thursley, in D—shire. They travelled by easy stages ; and Augustine saw with delight, that Temple bore the fatigues

of the journey wonderfully well. They approached within seven miles of their destination. They had travelled nearly the whole of that day, by Temple's particular desire, that they might not pass another night at an inn; and though the evening began to close in, Temple seemed but slightly fatigued. In answer to Augustine's inquiry, he replied, that he felt no pain, and was very happy. He even exerted himself, and tried to point out, through the dim light, some of his favourite objects in the scenery around them. The carriage turned from a winding lane, through which they had been passing, and rolled onward over a road of level turf.

"I longed for this soft, well-known turf," said Temple. "How I enjoy the hushing stillness in which we advance! I seem almost to taste the pure freshness of this balmy air! I am so happy to come hither with you!"

He leaned his head upon his friend's shoulder, and breathed so gently, yet so regularly, that Montague thought he slept. Again he spoke a few words in his soft, clear voice.

"My memory is rather confused, dear

Montague. Could you repeat to me the twenty-third Psalm?"

Augustine remembered it perfectly, and repeated it.

The stars came out, and the crescent moon, and the dark-blue vault of heaven shone one soft blaze of light.

"Who could look upward, now," said Temple, "and not believe? 'When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon, and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?'" *

These sacred words were rather murmured than spoken; and Montague felt a few tears fall on his hand. He, however, said nothing, but clasped the hand of his friend, and felt the pressure gently returned. But soon after, some strange misgivings rushed into his mind. He called to the post-boy to stop—he was alone with a lifeless body!

"Where shall I drive, sir?" said the post-boy—"to Thursley?"

* Psalm viii. 3, 4.

“ Oh ! no : not to Thursley now. Is there no quiet little inn near this very place ? ”

There was—and thither Augustine directed the man to drive, while he supported the corpse in his own arms, as tenderly as if its immortal tenant had been still inhabiting there.

Montague thought at first, that he would go on to Thursley that evening ; but as Temple (when he wrote to signify his return home to his parents), had not named any particular day, he judged it better to let them pass another night without learning their sad loss. He also felt, that without rest he should be scarcely equal to the mournful offices he had engaged to perform. His own health and spirits had been much tried by his constant anxiety, and the unvaried attentions which he had paid to his poor friend ; for he had passed the two previous nights by the bedside of his beloved Temple.

The next morning, before he set out to Thursley, he entered the little upper chamber, in which they had laid the corpse. Its walls were whitewashed, and its furniture

very rude and simple; but its stillness and cheerfulness made it the very place in which Augustine would have chosen to leave the body of his dear and faithful friend. The small, angular bay window looked out upon a green meadow, through which a shallow river gurgled over its stony bed; and in that quiet chamber few sounds were heard without, except the natural and monotonous music of the stream, or the tinkling of a sheep-bell from the wide heath beyond. Prints (such as the pedlars carry about with them) were hung around the room. Augustine would scarcely have noticed them, had not his attention been arrested by one of those circumstances, which (however common in themselves) often make a deep impression on the heart. The window being partly darkened, a soft gloom prevailed throughout the room, except that a bright, broad flood of sunshine streamed through one side of the window over the bed on which the corpse was laid, and falling on the wall beyond it, played over one of the little pictures. Augustine half unconsciously went up to the picture: it represented the prodigal son, his

garments in rags, his face haggard, his head bowed down with shame ; but his father's arms were supporting him, and he was received with the kiss of love and peace. Under the print were the well-known words,—“ And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell upon his neck, and kissed him.” And when Augustine thought upon the words, and marked how the sunbeam passed onward over the corpse of his dearest friend, and silently pointed out the prodigal's return, he knelt down weeping by the cold body, and prayed that his stony heart might be taken away.

Augustine took a little boy as his guide, and set off across the heath to Thursley. He had often heard his friend Temple describe his favourite scenery ; and as he walked along, and looked around him, he did not feel quite a stranger there, though he sighed deeply, as he thought that he could never walk there with that dear departed friend. The little path, after crossing several hills of wild and rugged heath, led into a very narrow lane, the

sides of which were steep and high, covered in many places with patches of gorse, then rich with golden blossoms. After winding along for some hundred yards, the lane was terminated by meeting a broader lane at right angles. At this spot a little babbling brook flowed across the road. Augustine stopped on the little bridge over this brook; for he was struck by the picturesque appearance of an old and ruinous house. It appeared to have been at one time a spacious mansion, probably the abode of some person of wealth or distinction, though only part of a massy stone wall and a broad gable end were standing. But his attention was more particularly fixed, when a window above the porch was opened, and the casement fastened back by a young female. He saw that she was a gentlewoman by her elegant, yet perfectly simple dress; but the sweetness of her smile, and the calm loveliness of her whole countenance, reminded him instantly of the fine benevolent expression of his friend Temple. Augustine turned to his young guide, as the maiden quitted the window; but the boy understood

him before he could speak, and informed him that the young Miss at the window was good Parson Temple's daughter.

"The Parsonage is farther on," said the boy; and they walked forward.

As they advanced, the lane widened, and assumed a mere picturesque character. The banks became abrupt walls of sand rock: their sides, in some places rough with the old twisted roots of the trees, whose branches interlaced above, or gay with the green shining leaf and scarlet berries of the holly, and long trailing garlands of luxuriant ivy. In one place a little rustic bridge formed a footpath over the lane, from one side to the other. At this spot Augustine dismissed his little guide; for the view opened upon the parsonage-house, an old building near the entrance of the lane, presenting three quaintly-carved gable ends to the road.

Augustine lingered about within sight of the parsonage, till he observed Miss Temple pass along down the lane and enter; and then, with a beating heart and trembling hand, he rang the bell at the door of the parsonage,

and, without giving in his name, requested to see Miss Temple.

Augustine was led into a library, or rather study, looking towards the back of the house. The first thing that struck his view was a sketch of his late friend, the size of life. The resemblance was very true to what Temple had been when Montague first met him. He was standing before this portrait when Miss Temple entered the room. She turned inquiringly to Augustine, who declared his name.

She looked at him steadfastly for a few moments, and then said, " Surely I see my brother's friend, his favourite friend !"

Before he could reply, she begged him to tell her how he had left her brother. His look must have told her more than he intended it should; for the fine animation of her countenance died away as soon as she had spoken.

" Is he very ill?" she said, and hesitated to say more.

" He begged me," replied Montague timidly, " if during his journey hither, I had any bad news to communicate to his family,

not to see his father at first, nor his mother, but to inquire for yourself. He assured me that you would find strength of mind, not only to hear the worst, but gently to break it to his parents."

While Augustine spoke, she sat motionless, except that once she clasped her hands closely, as they rested on her lap; and once or twice she raised her face upwards; and in doing so, the large tears fell heavily from her eyes. She spoke, and a slight convulsive motion, somewhat like a smile, but not a smile, disturbed her calm features.

"I know it all!—his spirit has left us!—I expected nothing else: yet it would have been a comfort to have seen the look of love in his mild eyes, and heard once again his sweet voice. But I am sure," she said, firmly, "I am *now sure*, it is best otherwise."

Again she looked upward, and her lip moved, perhaps in prayer. Then taking out her handkerchief, she quietly wiped her eyes, and turned to Augustine.

"I am sadly confused now, Mr. Montague," she said; "but, with God's gracious aid, I

will do all that my own dear brother expected of me."

But on mentioning her brother, her fortitude failed her. "Will you forgive my leaving you, sir?" she said, with a very faltering voice, and rose up; but almost immediately she returned to her seat, and with a calmer voice, said, "I ought not to detain you here. Will you tell me when he died, and the circumstances of his death? I think they were such that I may comfort my dear father and mother with them, when I tell them of our loss. You may tell me all?" she said, observing that Montague delayed to do so.

He related to her every little circumstance of his friend's illness and death. The sister seemed to forget her grief, as she listened with intense interest to every word he uttered. When she had finished, she held out her hand to him, and thanked him warmly; but in the midst of her thanks, her composure forsook her, and she burst into a violent flood of tears. As soon as she was a little composed, she rose, and accompanied him herself to the house door.

“ You will excuse my not ringing for our old servant,” she said ; “ but she knows nothing yet, and her grief might betray the truth to my father before I have endeavoured to prepare him.”

Augustine begged to know if there was not any thing he could do for her.

“ You shall hear from me very shortly,” she replied—“ nothing just at present—Yes ! will you offer up your prayers for us ?”

Montague turned slowly from the door, marvelling at the firmness, the calm and pious firmness, of a girl so very young and feminine.

CHAPTER IX.

MONTAGUE could not find it in his heart to refuse the invitation which he received, to remain a short time at the parsonage. He was pleased with every thing, and every one he saw. There was no repulsive gloom in their grief: there was hope, and almost happiness, in it. When a death happens in many families, they seem to feel only for the body; and horror and grief muse over the narrow coffin, and the corruption within it; and the grave, filled up with black damp earth—beneath which lies, at all hours and during all seasons, the same form that they have daily seen in the warmth, and cheerfulness, and comfort of their own pleasant home.

But in this secluded parsonage the death of one of its dearest inmates was felt very differently. There was a blank, certainly. There were books, and papers, and many other things, which had lost their owner, which none could claim as their own, but

which every one loved and valued. There were mistakes made about the merest trifles, which could not have been made, had not he who caused them, been missing; and such mistakes pierced through the soul like a sword for a moment, or brought bitter tears into the eyes. But amid all that natural grief, which every human being must feel, the prevailing feeling was not *grief*. The bereaved family seemed to look upon themselves as honoured; nay, as if their house had been sanctified. They believed—they were almost confident, that death to the *body* of their beloved one, had been freedom and glory to his soul. You might see how fully they agreed with St. Paul, “that it was far better to be absent from the body and present with the Lord.” Every thing went on throughout the house, the every day duties of all were attended to as usual: they knew that idleness would have been then a dangerous luxury to them. But they never shunned the subject of their loss; they never met together, without speaking of their beloved William. They spoke of his early childhood; they traced up

the whole course of his short life; and his parents blessed his memory: and all wept sweetly over it.

Mr. Temple was a middle-aged man, with plain manly habits, and quiet manners. There was something about the shape of his head, and the colour of his features, which told that he must have been in his youth not commonly handsome; but the expression of his countenance was far more beautiful than the noblest regularity of feature. He united, what is rarely united, an undeviating habit of speaking the simple truth, with sweetness and even courteousness of manners.

Mrs. Temple was mild and rather reserved. She spoke very seldom, but her remarks were always distinguished by good sense; and she seemed to possess a temper which nothing could ruffle. She was one of those characters which it is almost impossible to describe; for there was nothing striking in her opinions or manners,—nothing but a total absence of display and affectation.

Charlotte Temple was——but I shall not attempt to describe her. You may know some-

thing of her, yet very little, from the remaining pages of this narrative.

Augustine's eyes began to open to the power of religion while he resided with the family of this honest country parson. He saw no proud nor haughty looks; he heard no angry disputes—no petty bickerings. They all seemed anxious to keep up a unity, —a oneness of spirit in the bond of peace; and that spirit was sought, and supplied daily from the same fountain of eternal wisdom and goodness. It was with them truly a life-giving spirit; and he was surprised to see how the noble lessons of Scripture, daily read and prayed over among them, were realized all through the day in their practice. He scarcely knew what induced him to linger day after day at the Parsonage, where almost the only society he enjoyed was that of a grave clergyman, and his wife and daughter: but he certainly did find a positive enjoyment in their society. He felt that at last he had a home, and friends, with whom he could live in unconstrained confidence. There are some persons with whom we can be better ac-

quainted after residing in their society for a few weeks, than with others whom we have known for many years ; and such were the Temples to Augustine. Their grief and his own at the death of William had roused him to a species of exertion very different from any he had experienced before. He had found himself, ere he was aware, bringing forward powers of conversation of which he was before unconscious, and paying all the nameless and delicate attentions of a grateful and affectionate child to his parents. Nay, he had become in some manner as a brother to the pure minded and modest Charlotte. Even the religion of the Temples was interesting to him. He confessed to himself, that he had at last found true religion ; and he felt that they were not only sincere, but *sincere according to the truth*. They had neither cant in their conversation, nor display in their conduct.

About a fortnight after the funeral of William Temple, the family were all assembled to morning prayers. Mr. Temple had opened the Bible, and began to read,

when the door slowly opened, and a young and pleasing looking girl entered the room. She laid her finger on her lip, when Mr. Temple lifted up his head and looked on her, and timidly stealing towards the side of the apartment where Charlotte Temple was sitting, she smiled, and sat down beside her, taking the hand of her friend as she did so; and clasping it affectionately within her own. When the devotions of the morning were finished, the young lady turned to Mrs. Temple, and said, "I am come a self-invited guest, and I hope you can receive me, my dear ma'am. I have taken the opportunity (as they are all gone to a public breakfast) of enjoying the society of dear Charlotte."

"We are very glad to see you at any time, my dear Miss Neville," replied Mrs. Temple.

But Augustine remarked that there was not the same eager delight in the manner of any of the Temple family towards her, as there was in that of Miss Neville towards them.

"You look very well, my dear Sophia," said Charlotte; "I heard you had been ill."

"Not exactly ill," she replied, sitting down

near Mr. Temple as she spoke, and turning to him, "but my health and spirits have been much affected by some little differences which have occurred among us. I find my situation at times very unpleasant."

"I am really sorry to hear you say so," replied Mr. Temple; "you seem to me to be placed in circumstances where no uncommon degree of discretion is needed."

Miss Neville scarcely heeded this remark, but continued, "My father was very angry with me, because last Lord's day I happened to say, that Mr. Butler did not preach the gospel, and that I could not hear him any longer. I had agreed with Miss Palmer to accompany her to meeting in the evening; and my mother (who had desired me not to go) met me, as I was stealing quietly up the back stairs to my room. I happened to be nearly wet through, for a heavy rain was falling as I walked home. My disobedience was reported to my father, and his anger against me was very violent indeed. It is a hard thing to find foes in one's own household—to meet with persecution from my own family; but

it is no doubt good for me to be thus afflicted; we know that the reproach of Christ has not yet ceased."

Miss Neville said this with the air of a martyr, turning her eyes alternately towards Mr. and Mrs. Temple and Charlotte, as if to ask a tender sympathy from them. There was, however, no expression of sympathy in Mr. Temple's countenance, as he replied in a quiet and very serious manner, "The reproach of Christ is not to be so lightly spoken of. I am sorry to say that many persons are too ready to bring almost a just persecution upon themselves by their own unguarded and injudicious conduct; and having done so, they find it much easier to take shelter under what they call 'suffering for the cross of Christ,' than to use their common sense, and examine into their conduct, and its motives, and confess the blame which attaches to themselves. My dear young lady," he continued, looking kindly upon her, "I wish to be your friend. I fear for you, for I think you are in danger."

"But why!—how! my dear sir?" and she

leaned her arm on the table, and stretched forward her neck, much embarrassed, the colour deepening in her cheek as she spoke.

"It has been said," he replied, "that it is dangerous to put up a sail without taking sufficient ballast into the vessel. Are you not putting up the sail of a high profession, and forgetting that the ballast of a humble spirit, and a charity which never faileth, is absolutely necessary? It is to little purpose that we discover what is correct in Christian knowledge, if that knowledge is not accompanied by Christian practice. Your parents are persons well acquainted with the world. You are, doubtless, not the first young enthusiast they have heard of; and I would have you beware, lest, instead of inducing them to adopt your sentiments, you are the unwilling means of strengthening their prejudices against genuine and vital religion."

"But are we not told to expect that the parent shall rise against the child, and the brother against the sister? Surely the words of our Saviour will be realised!"

"They often have been," he replied;

“nor will they ever cease to be, but not so often, nor in the same degree, in a nation of professed Christians, as among the converted few in a heathen country. I have often imagined with what an assurance of comfort those passages of scripture may be read by some young and feeble Indian, the only Christian in her family! How sweetly they must teach her to look upon the bitter persecutions she endures from the dearest persons of her own household, as her appointed lot! I do not say that such persecution has ceased here, among us. Yet, in such a case as yours, an ardent and inexperienced spirit is often most in fault.”

“Then, sir, I suppose,” said Miss Neville, with a slight tone of impatience, “I suppose you would have me conform to all their worldly and sinful practices, in obedience to my parents, who are, I am grieved to say so, dead, quite dead, as to any spiritual life? You would have me disown our holy faith, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant. That sweet hymn, which your

daughter Charlotte first put into my hands, has taught me, I trust, my duty better :

‘ Ashamed of Jesus ! Can it be ? ’ ”

And so she would have gone on ; when Charlotte interrupted her, fixing on her a look of mild reproach.

“ My dear Miss Neville, you strangely mistake my father’s words. A little thought would convince you that you have given to them a sense very different from that which they were intended to convey. You know, that no words of his were ever spoken to bid us compromise in any way our belief in the blessed Lord. He would have us all come out from among the worldly and the wicked, and be separate ; but he would have us also remember, that as the root of a tree is hidden in the earth, so should it be with our *Christian faith* ; and as the stem and the branches of the tree are not hidden, but flourish, and blossom, and bear fruit abundantly in the face of day, so should it be with our *Christian practice*. A man would never re-

move the earth, and uncover the root, to prove its existence, and to show from whence the tree received its life and support. He would point to the fruitful branches and say, "They could not be seen thus if their root was dead."

"Charlotte, you are a good advocate to your father," said the kind parson; "and before we quit this subject, let me tell Miss Neville of an instance which came under my own observation, in which a young girl conducted herself so admirably, when placed in a situation very similar to her own, that her behaviour had a blessed effect upon her parents, and their whole household. She was a young and remarkably timid girl; but though born and bred in a very worldly family, she became, by some means or other, so deeply impressed with the truth of the Christian religion, that she determined, with the grace of God, to live a holy and Christian life; and not to swerve from her duty for any fear, or for any praise of man. I remember, as when they were spoken, her father's words to me, after he had also become a serious and con-

vinced Christian. ‘ I can now mark my child’s first growth in religion,’ he said, ‘ from the improving influence it had on her heart and disposition. I often wondered what could make the dear, unboastful girl so sweetly submissive to her mother and myself; so gentle and forbearing towards her brothers and sisters; so ready to forgive every one who had offended her; so simply strict in speaking and acting the truth; so uniformly cheerful; such a real comforter in affliction; so wise in the advice she gave; so sound in her judgment. The distinguishing grace of her character was humility, a genuine humility, an absence of all self-conceit and display; and this was to me the more astonishing. At last the secret was made known to me. She ventured to decline obeying me in some request, which I now should feel it sinful to make. I insisted on obedience; but neither threats nor entreaties could move her. In a transport of rage, I commanded her to confess what could induce her to disobey me—to break the commandment to obey her father and mother. She threw herself at

my feet,' he continued, ' and with a face bathed in tears, and clasped, but trembling hands raised towards me, she said: In this command, my father, *your will* is not the *will* of our *heavenly* father; and, therefore, I cannot obey it. Were my obedience to be given, I should indeed break the fifth commandment of our Lord God, which is not written 'obey thy father and mother,' but *honour* thy father and thy mother. The obedience which a child would pay to the sinful command of an earthly father, would be to *dishonour* that parent.' The father had the good sense and the candour to respect the principles of so meek yet firm a child; and those who loved the virtues of the young girl, gradually began to inquire into the motives, the principles from which they sprung. Thus were her secret prayers heard, and her unboastful piety blessed; and they who loved religion first for her sake, soon loved it for its own: like the youthful Daniel, she was brought by God 'into favour and tender love with all who knew her.' "

Mr. Temple ceased speaking. Every one

present sat in silence; and Miss Neville appeared to think deeply over his words. At last she turned to him, and said: "I am a poor deluded creature, and your words have brought before me many startling truths. Dear, dear sir, I can never repay you. But will you continue to advise me? Will you become my kind and faithful guide?"

"I would fain do more than this," he replied, and his words and his smile displayed the gentlest affection; "I will pray, without ceasing, that you may be blessed with • that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

The above conversation had taken place during breakfast, or Augustine would probably have quitted the room. He saw also by Miss Neville's manner when she began to speak, that she did not seek any private discussion. She belonged to a class that love to bring forward their difficulties; and would

• James, ch. 3, v. 17.

rather make a display before strangers than make no display at all. She was not, certainly, aware that display was the great motive which actuated her; but how common is a deep delusion on such subjects in such a character!

In the course of that same morning Mr. Temple declared his intention of walking out. As it was the first time that he had quitted the house since his illness, Augustine begged leave to accompany him. The good man shook his head, and smiled, as he replied, "O! no, my young friend; I will not condemn you to so dull an office. I walk very slowly, and have a few visits to pay, which would make the walk even more wearying to you."

"Yes! but you must accept Mr. Montague's kind offer, dear father," said Charlotte, "or I shall be obliged to leave Miss Neville, and claim my right to be your support to-day, as I always am."

"You are very kind to an infirm creature," said Mr. Temple, as he took the offered arm of Augustine. "You often remind

me of my poor boy : he was just as attentive and good, and would often prefer my society (even when I was sick, and unable to converse much with him), to that of young and lively persons. We will go," he said, "to an old couple, who were the especial favourites of my son William. You will be pleased to see them ; and they will thank me for bringing to their house the friend of their favourite William."

As they passed through that part of the village nearest to the church, the door of a little, lowly cottage opened, and there came forth a young and remarkably elegant woman. She stooped her head, to avoid striking herself against the low door-way ; and, as she replied to some remark of the mistress of the cottage, Augustine observed a smile of peculiar sweetness beaming over her face. On perceiving Mr. Temple, she hastened to meet him. "I am so glad to see you, dear Mr. Temple ! so very glad to see you among your villagers again ; and I am sure we are all glad !"

Her voice and manner expressed more than

her words; and Augustine thought her countenance one of the finest he had ever seen. After inquiring with affectionate earnestness about Mrs. Temple and Charlotte, she turned from them; and Augustine eagerly requested to be told her name. He was struck with the appearance of one so evidently used to the first society, and so distinguished by her beauty and perfect elegance, coming forth from a mean little cottage in that retired village.

“She is one, of whom you have heard us speak,” replied Mr. Temple: “the young countess of C——, a countess in her own right. Her domain of Fountain Royal lies just on the other side of these hills. I knew her excellent father very well; and I feel much interested in whatever concerns her. He died when she was about twelve years of age; and she was then removed into the family of her aunt, Lady Arabella de Roos, who took her to Paris, to educate her there. She left us, one of the noblest and most ingenuous creatures I ever knew. She returned about two years since with the most fasci-

nating and finished manners. I have heard many persons loud in their admiration of what they term improvement. I cannot agree with them. I could weep over the change. Fair young creature ! she resembles, I have often thought, the young ruler mentioned in the gospel—undecided, and weak ; yet, when Jesus looked on him, he loved him. She is one of the kindest and most benevolent beings I ever met with. Doubtless, she has been carrying some little present, with her own hands, to that cottage.”

Here he was interrupted by the woman to whom the cottage belonged. She came forward, and overpowered the weak voice of Mr. Temple with her loud volubility.

“ Pray walk in, good gentlemen ! I wish to know your opinion, sir (turning to Mr. Temple), on a certain subject. I cannot agree about it with the minister of our meeting ; and I took upon myself to tell him so ; but, dear me ! why, he made but a poor hand of his explanation ! Now Saint Paul says——”

Mr. Temple listened to her for a few moments, and then said very mildly : “ you are

too fond of these questions, Hannah. I have often told you so; and ‘they do but gender strife.’ There are plenty of smooth places in the Holy Bible where we may find ‘the author and finisher of our faith.’ Why should you wander after difficulties? Be contented with the study of those truths which are really necessary to salvation. If you become thoroughly instructed in them, by the teaching of the Spirit of truth, you will, before many years are past, know even as you are known, and all will be made plain and clear to you. You had a visit, I find, to-day.”

“O yes! from the lady. Poor thing!” (as she spoke, she heaved a dolefully deep sigh.)

“Why, what has happened?” cried Mr. Temple.

“Oh! she is quite in the dark; knows no more than a child; wholly dead and lost, she seems.”

“You speak very confidently, Hannah!”

“Oh! I think I may say I know it, sir! Not a crumb has she for the soul; plenty for the body. Here she will come with a bas-

ket full of victuals and raimént, and she has got a rare show of fine words, but none of the right sort."

"Hannah," said the good clergyman, abruptly, "answer me one question. Have you ever prayed for her? Nay, take care what you say: I want only a simple 'yes,' or 'no.'"

"Why, no, sir, I don't remember that I ever have."

"Then let me counsel you," he said, solemnly, "as you seem to know so very well the state of her soul, to *pray* for her, and not to *speak* thus of her. You expose yourself sadly, when you express yourself in such a way, not only in my presence, but before this gentleman, who is a stranger both to Lady C. and yourself. Remember who has said, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.' How can you presume to speak so confidently as to the state of any person's soul?"

"Why, as I said, sir, she has never a word for the soul. I did ask her, once, to go to prayer with me, when I felt very poorly; and I hoped and begged she would pray *experi-*

*mentally**; but she only coloured up, and stammered; and then asked for the prayer-book, and read a few prayers in a whisper. I am sure I don't wish to find fault with the meanest vermin; for, dear me! why, I am a poor, vile, lost sinner, and can do no good thing!" and she ran on in a strain of self-accusation which astonished even Augustine, used as he was to the same strain in Mr. Cramp.

When she had ceased speaking, Mr. Temple said very quietly, "I do not like all this. You seem to *know* a great deal, but I cannot perceive in you the *spirit* as well as the *language* of deep humility. You *talk* too much. You would *feel* your sinfulness more deeply if you *said* less about it. I wish also to perceive more of that spirit of love, or charity, which hopeth all things, and believeth all things, which never faileth. To tell you the truth, I think that you have considered yourself affronted by something which may have passed this morning between yourself and Lady C——."

* I suppose she meant 'extempore.'

“ Well, sir ! perhaps I have.”

“ And there is the cause,” he said, pointing through the window which looked into the garden behind the house : “ I can guess by the swelled eyes and the sulky look of that great girl of yours,” and he pointed to a tall awkward girl who was standing near a gooseberry bush, and cramming her mouth with the unripe fruit, “ I can guess that Lady C—— has been finding fault with that long untidy hair, and those dirty curl papers.”

“ Why, yes ! the poor babe was sent home from school, and ordered not to go back till her hair was cut ; and then, they took off the beads she had got about her neck ; and they *was* give to her only yesterday by her god-mother. Poor lamb ! I could not get her to take them off when she went to bed last night ; but the school-mistress snatched them off in no time ; and means to keep them till I go for them. Why, 'tis cruel !”

Hannah had been standing till now where she could not see her daughter ; but when she came forward and looked through the window, and saw the girl devouring the goose-

berries, she suddenly screamed out, "Come in, child."

The girl filled her mouth again with gooseberries, and stared sullenly on the ground ; but when her mother's command was repeated in a sharper tone, she pushed the fruit with her tongue into one of her cheeks, which stuck out with the lump, while she bawled out, "I won't, mother."

"You won't, won't you, you dirty hussy?" cried Hannah, whose whole manner was strangely altered, "then I'll make you."

The girl gulped down her great mouthful as she saw the door flung open and her mother appear ; and snatching for another handful at the bush, she jumped over, and broke down as she did so, some large ill-rooted cabbage plants, and made her escape into the lane."

"That woman," said Mr. Temple, as they quitted the cottage, "is in a fearful state. She has surprising head-knowledge for one in her station ; but I often fear that her heart is wholly untouched. She reminds me of Talkative, in the Pilgrim's Progress ; who is described, if I remember, thus : ' Religion hath

no place in his heart, or house, or conversation ; all he hath lieth in his tongue, and his religion is to make a noise therewith ; yet he will give you an hundred Scriptures to support his opinion.' You could not help observing her untidy house and person, but you saw very little of her censorious spirit and violence of temper. I assure you that my heart often sickens within me when she comes up with her mouth full of religion. I have reasoned with her ; read the word of God to her ; prayed with her : but, as yet, no means that I have used have been blessed. I do earnestly hope that the time may yet come when she may feel that 'the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.' But we will enter here," exclaimed he, changing his tone, and lifting the latch of a low gate.

The cottage which they now approached was part of an ancient and once spacious house, which had been divided and let out in small tenements to the poor. The old pair occupied a few chambers at one end, where a broad gable faced the road, the peaked summit of which, and the beams and casement

frames, were all richly carved. They entered what appeared to have been a large hall, where an old woman was seated at her spinning-wheel. Notwithstanding her extreme age, her skin was smooth and fresh, and she sat quite erect in her high-backed chair. Her husband, a tall, fine-looking man, whose white hair fell in waves almost to his shoulders, had risen to turn the hour-glass upon the wide window-sill. The room might, at times, be dark and gloomy, but then the noon-day sun shone through the casement, and poured a soft glow of golden light over the whole spacious room. Augustine was pleased to observe with what true delicacy the old couple hesitated to speak of William till Mr. Temple mentioned him. The old man had kept his eyes fixed upon the open Bible which lay on a table. His wife made many attempts to converse, but her weak voice faltered, and tears trembled in her eyes. She was assured, however, by the calmness and resigned cheerfulness of Mr. Temple's manner, and then she began to ask many questions.

“ Ah !” she said, (when the happy father had related to her many circumstances of his son’s illness and death) “ how little I thought that he would so soon depart from among us. How fresh and lively he used to look as he came in by that door ! his very voice was enough to cheer one ! Many a time has he sat down between my husband and me, on that low stool, and read to us God’s precious promises ; and taken such trouble to make it all clear to us. But it will not be long, I trust, before I and my good man meet him again. I trust we have a good hope, through the Lord Jesus ; and we sit here waiting every day for our call. We have done with the world ; and as our treasure is laid up in the heavens, I hope our hearts are there also.”

“ I see that you keep the Bible from the dust,” said Mr. Temple.

“ Yes, bless the Lord ! and my husband, who is a fine scholar, reads out a verse every now and then ; and I believe it will be a greater pleasure than ever to read, now he has got those beautiful new glasses which my lady over at the Great House brought him

this morning. To think of a grand lady like her remembering that he had only got one of his glasses left, and that was cracked ; for our next door neighbour borrowed the old spectacles, and somehow set her foot on them. My lady came in last Saturday, just when our poor neighbour was telling me and bewailing herself about it ; and this morning she brought ever-so-many pair with her own hands, and made my master suit himself ; and then sat down and heard him read a chapter to me."

"Has she ever read the Bible herself to you?" said Mr. Temple, "or spoken to you about your souls?"

"Why I can't just remember that she has ; but then she is always telling us to listen to your holy teaching, and to look upon you as our best friend on earth : and when we are telling her how poor, dear Master William and our Miss Charlotte came to read and pray with us, and how good and kind you all are to us, I have heard her sigh deeply, and seen the tears gather over her bright eyes ; and she told me this very day, that she wished she

could lead such a life as you all do, and die such a death as your sweet Master William did. God bless her! and teach her in the right way. Poor young lady! She has a world of temptation about her; and 'tis more hard for her to know the 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' with all her riches, and her gay flatterers around her, than it is even for poor unlearned creatures like we, who see things as they are."

When they had left the cottage, Mr. Temple said, "You see how the real disciples of the Lord look upon such a person as lady C——. They have their master's spirit; and it may well be said, that in them, 'pity is akin to love.'"

CHAPTER X.

As soon as they returned home, Mr. Temple, who felt rather fatigued, retired to lie down, and his wife attended him.—Miss Neville had taken her departure; and Augustine found himself alone with Charlotte. She was working very busily, and he took up one of the many books which lay upon the table and began to read: at least, appeared to read; for, in fact, though he scarcely moved his head, his eyes were continually raised towards the young maiden who sat opposite him. Persons may say what they please, but there is an almost irresistible charm in female loveliness. I do not speak of what the disgusting sensualist would praise, but of that modest and indescribable something which a person of manly feeling and of true mental refinement must admire. Charlotte Temple was not strikingly beautiful. Augustine had admired the expression of her coun-

tenance from the moment he beheld her, but he had gradually discovered that no person had ever seemed so lovely in his eyes. She had that peculiar clearness of complexion which will make even plain features pleasing. Her eyes were the most modest and mild he had ever seen ; and the shape of her mouth was such as we only find in a person of a peculiarly pure mind. She was perfectly feminine, and there was a delicate purity about her whole person, of which her very dress seemed to partake.—But it is useless to attempt any description of what would not be understood except by those who have met with a Charlotte Temple. There was another charm about her countenance in Augustine's eyes. It resembled some lovely face which he had seen in his childhood: he could not say where.

As he sat gazing on Charlotte, it seemed the most natural things in the world for Augustine to think, how happy such a sister would have made him ! and then, it suddenly occurred to him, that her husband would be a happy man ; but who would that husband be ?

—why should not he?—what should prevent him?—He considered within himself, and he could discover no impediment to his marriage, no impediment that might not be removed. As he was thus musing, with his eyes fixed upon her, the book dropped from his heedless hand.

Charlotte, whose face had been bent down over her work, was startled, and looked up; her eyes met his, and, perhaps, his look perplexed her.

“Have you been asleep, Mr. Montague?” she cried, playfully.

“Oh! no,” he rejoined; “only dreaming very pleasantly.”

“About whom?” she inquired.

“About yourself.”

“It were high time for you to be better employed,” she said, and smiled.—“Will you wake up, and read to me while I work?”

“Certainly, I shall be delighted to do so.”

“Any book that you please,” she continued: “that in which you were reading, if it pleased you.”

Augustine replied not, for he had not even noticed the title of the work ; but he opened the volume, and began to read.—“ The joy of religion is an exorcist to the mind ; it expels the demons of carnal mirth and madness.”

“ That remark is very just,” said Charlotte, lifting up her head : “ it is like many others of the same writer, full of vigour and truth, and goes directly to the heart.”

“ He must be indeed happy,” observed Augustine, “ who can feel, and at the same time acknowledge its truth.”

“ He must be unhappy, who cannot do so,” said she.

“ But I,” returned Augustine, “ cannot ; I have not felt it. The truth of religion I feel, and must acknowledge ; and carnal mirth, and such madness, now appear to me as demons ; but, alas ! I fear that the joy of religion will never be mine.”

“ Why fear that it will not ?” replied she, “ rather pray that it may. It will not do to faint in our need : we must pray that it may be supplied.”

"Ah! but you do not know what I have been," he replied, despondingly; "though the friend, the chosen friend of your brother, I am as different from what he was as darkness from light. I am a renegade, a wretched apostate from the faith of my early years.— You know not what a life I have led!"

"I believe, I know more about you than you suspect," she said, very mildly, looking down upon her work, for a deep blush mantled over her whole face.

"How! you surprise me!"

"It was not surprising, that William should speak to his only sister of his favourite friend. It is now nearly a year and a half since he first mentioned you."

"I wonder how you could bear to notice such a person as myself," said Augustine, "such a wretch as you know me to be, if your brother drew a faithful picture of my character and habits."

"We have been used to esteem poor William a good judge of character; and he always seemed to think of you as one who had only strayed away from the happy flock of the holy

and the good; and who would soon find the pleasures of sin unsatisfying, and would return and repent."

"Alas!" replied Augustine, "he little knew my heart!"

"No," said Charlotte, earnestly, "but he knew the power and the love of Him, who can soften and change the hardest heart; and doubtless his prayers were always offered for you, and they will be heard."

Augustine sighed, and spoke not for some minutes. At length he replied: "But I have no friend like William to pray for me now—unless—unless I might hope, that his sister could feel an interest in me, and pray for me as he did."

"Since I have known you, I have not ceased to do so," she exclaimed, with much animation; "but it would become only an idle and inglorious spirit to ask for the prayers of his friend, and use neither prayers nor exertions himself. Since you permit me to express an interest in you, I will speak the truth, as a friend should, and tell you how agreeably we have been surprised in finding you so un-

like what we had expected: but it grieves us to think, that when you return to the scene of your former temptations, you may return also to those habits which will ruin you for ever."

Augustine fixed on her a look of grateful and ardent admiration as she spoke, and then his cheek glowed, and his eyes sparkled, and his whole countenance beamed with delight.

"Let me carry with me the joyful assurance," he exclaimed, rapturously, "that one heart is wholly mine, your heart, my own Charlotte; and, believe me, all those hated temptations to which I have so often yielded, will become powerless—I know they will. Only tell me that you love me."—Augustine would have gone on in the same strain; but when he looked up, and gazed upon the young girl, he felt that he might be talking nonsense.

She certainly did blush deeply, but she fixed her eyes on him with a look of unfeigned astonishment. "I will not seem to misunderstand you," she said, "but I do indeed hope, that you will not again speak to

me on such a subject. Would it not be rather silly in two such children as you and I, to think of marriage?"

"But answer me this question," cried he, eagerly, "were our parents to give their consent, would you refuse to look upon me as your future husband?"

"I would rather not answer such a question; but you wish me to do so, and I will. I believe I should refuse—and yet," she smiled, but spoke earnestly, "I feel no preference for any other person—I should *certainly* refuse.—A husband should be the guide and the guardian of his wife; and I tell you the simple truth when I say, that at present, I do not think you love God sufficiently, to love your wife as I expect, or, I should say, *hope* to be loved."

"You are cold and unfeeling," he replied quickly: "Your religion has deadened you to every thing else."

Charlotte did not reply, but the fine colour glowed more deeply in her cheek; and tears trembled in her eyes and overflowed. She did not attempt to conceal her agitation, but

said very meekly, "I do not deserve this, indeed I do not: you might have given me credit for feeling. I fear that you expect from me feelings that I have not; and will not assume. I have been taught to think, that love is something very different from that which novel writers, and many poets, have succeeded in persuading the world to regard under the same name. I do not quite believe that it is a wild and irresistible passion, which must fill the whole heart, and often break it."

Augustine sighed. "Ah!" said he, "I see that you are a sceptic: you have never loved, yourself, and know not what others have felt; but what can disprove the fact, that many persons have suffered from the passion which you speak so lightly of?"

"Indeed, I would not attempt to do so; I would only say, that I think we should all be unprejudiced by the opinions of others, and judge for ourselves about that which is called, love, and not think it absolutely necessary to fall in love, because even infatuated thousands have determined the question for us. I think we should be watchful over our treacherous

hearts, and examine into the claim and title of every intruder, before we permit him to inhabit, much less to reign there."

"And you would not love, then?"

Charlotte smiled archly, and said, "If I am to talk and dream only about one human being; if I am to be melancholy and mysterious, and lack-a-daisical; if I am to be very selfish, and think more of the gratification of my own idle fancies than of the happiness of others, and to die broken-hearted should my lot be disappointment:—then I would not love. But I am no sceptic," she continued. If the artless affection of Milton's Eve; if the tender devotedness of the high-souled Rachel, Lady Russel; or, if you please, the fondness of Shakespear's faithful Imogen be love: then I would wish to love. Of one thing I am sure, that true love must ennoble the heart where it abides. But I find I have no powers of argument to support my opinion. If you cannot understand me, I must consent to be esteemed cold-hearted."

"I must confess," replied Augustine, rather drily, "that I do *not* quite understand you.

You are, after all, as romantic, I believe, as myself."

Charlotte did not notice his remark, but said, "I have often wondered at the change which the possession of each other makes in two high-flown lovers. I have seen the same persons, who before their marriage, had eyes, and ears, and voices only for one another; who would sigh, and sit apart, and pine away, become strangely cold and careless, and even ill-tempered to one another, when there was, as persons say, no longer *any impediment* to their happiness."

"And will you give me no hope," said Augustine, returning to his suit, "that, at some future time, you will listen to me? Will you assure me that no rival——"

He would have gone on, but Charlotte suddenly rose up, and laughing, held up her finger as if to forbid him to speak.

"Now this is really too ridiculous! You still are making love after my positive declaration against it," she cried.

"And you will give me no answer?"

“ No, I will not,” she replied, still laughing.

“ Ah ! I see how it is,” he added. “ You cannot believe my promises of amendment. You only think of me as the poor, weak, sinful worldling that has been described to you.”

“ Mr. Montague,” said Charlotte, and her voice, and countenance, and whole manner, were serious at once, “ I do entreat you not to mistake me. I frankly tell you that you possess many claims to my regard. My brother’s letters did not, as you seem to suppose, prejudice me against you : but you shall read them, and judge for yourself how your friend spoke of you. You will find a little rosewood cabinet in your chamber to-night : this key will open it. You will see there William’s letters to me. Read any of them. They will interest, and may more than interest you ; they may comfort and encourage you.”

When Augustine retired to rest, he found that the little rosewood cabinet had been placed in his chamber. It was filled with letters and other memorials of his deceased

friend. One packet lay at the top, on which was inscribed, "Letters from Cambridge." Augustine read them all. I shall not ask my reader to do so, but will only quote a few passages relating to him.

EXTRACT I.

"You ask me about my friends, dearest Charlotte. I have not yet found one whom I would wish, from my present knowledge of him, to call my friend; if, however, I except one person, whom I have seen only three times. You like minute descriptions: you shall hear all about this new acquaintance. On my entering King's College chapel for the first time, about a week ago (I will describe the chapel some other time), I was struck by the appearance of a young man, like myself, a freshman (you may know a freshman, or one just come up to college, by the freshness of his gown). The day had been unusually cloudy, and a dim, soft light mellowed down every object in the chapel; when suddenly, and almost at the same moment, sounds, like the rolling of thunder, pealed from the organ,

and the sun burst out, and poured a blaze of glorious colours from the painted windows above, full upon the countenance of a young man whom I had not before noticed. He was standing by himself, and seemed lost in admiration at the rich and solemn music then filling the vaulted roof, and indeed the whole building, with sacred harmony. I never saw so fine a countenance. That purity, innocence, and sweetness, mingled with that serious thoughtfulness and manly fire, which we imagine in an angel's face. Do not fancy any thing effeminate. No one could have said, 'He would make a very pretty girl!'

EXTRACT II.

"I was surprised and pleased yesterday to meet the young man whose countenance had struck me as so uncommonly fine. He was introduced to me by an acquaintance of the name of Tarver, at whose rooms we were. There is a modest and manly simplicity in this Mr. Montague (for so he is named), which is as rare as it is delightful among the crowds of young men one meets with here. He

has been brought up, I hear, very strictly, and has known the Holy Scriptures from a child. We conversed together on many subjects: I say *we*, but in fact the conversation was kept up chiefly by him; for I have not yet been able to conquer my oppressive shyness. I think I should be inclined to call on Montague, notwithstanding my shyness, were it not contrary to Cambridge etiquette for a Pensioner to call first on a Fellow Commoner of the same standing: at least they tell me so, though I think the custom a very silly one."

EXTRACT III.

"You wish to hear more about Montague, but indeed I have little to tell you, for he has never called at my rooms; and lately I have not seen him in the society where we used to meet. I fear he is no longer what he was. I have passed him lately in company with some men, who have the character of being not only gay, but profligate. I spoke to him once, and he blushed so deeply, and seemed so confused, that I have since rather avoided

him. I cannot help thinking of him as a fallen angel."

EXTRACT IV.

"So long a time has passed since I last spoke of Montague, that you might probably think our acquaintance had entirely ceased; and indeed I thought it had, though I have always felt an unaccountable interest in him. Our acquaintance has been renewed; nay, we now look upon one another as intimate friends. Poor fellow! he has been very ill: but, Blessed be God! he is now fast recovering. You will be surprised to hear that for some weeks not a day has passed in which we have not met. He has asked for my friendship: he might have known that he possessed it. Dear Charlotte, he is not a common character. He has indeed strayed very far from the happy fold of real Christians; but his deep, and, I trust, sincere repentance, is very touching."

EXTRACT V.

"Alas! I fear that my friend, my poor friend, Montague, is very weak! I do not

mean as to bodily health; for he has now recovered his former strength. Would to God I could see what I have been so anxious about—what I have expected—a new and vigorous strength of principle! I am too sanguine. His manner becomes daily more constrained in my presence; I find him sometimes surrounded by his former associates. Is it possible, that such a blessing from our Heavenly Father, as returning health, should be accompanied with so much fearful levity, such a forgetfulness of that tender Father? I have not seen him for some days: I fear that he avoids me, expecting that I should upbraid him with his forgetfulness of the vows and resolutions made during his illness. He would not dread me, did he but know how full my heart is of grief and affection. O that I could but see him a decided, principled character!”

Augustine sat down, with the letters in his hand, and his thoughts wandered back through his past life. He remembered the child-like simplicity of his mind when he first left home. Pangs of shame and anguish shot

through his heart when he thought how greedily he had fed upon the fatal fruit of the tree of knowledge. "Vows and resolutions I have indeed made," he said to himself, "but to what purpose? the hand that wrote these letters is mouldering in the grave, and I am yet where I was—yet the same unstable, hesitating child! It is indeed time to be a decided, high-principled character." He remained some time rapt in deep meditation, then rising up, he opened his portfolio. "I must not let another hour pass away," he said, "without writing a full confession to my father."—He was firm to his determination. Without one excuse, he wrote a full account to his father of his excesses; of his rooted idleness; and of his debts. He did not ask to be forgiven: he said he could not expect forgiveness. He declared that he was willing to bear any privation—any punishment. "I can only compare myself," he wrote, "to the wretched prodigal. The dreadful famine has arisen in the land where I have chosen to dwell. I have, indeed, long ago begun to be in want; but it seems that I have only now come to

myself—and what can I do, but cry, ‘that I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.’ It is not only to you, my earthly father, that I must make this humble confession; for, if my sins and disobedience are awfully great against you, what are they against my heavenly father? but I know what to do. If the story of the Prodigal has spoken in vain as a *warning* to me, I feel it to be now a sweet encouragement to my despairing heart. I feel that I am solemnly forbidden to despair, and called upon to arise, and go to my father.” Augustine then spoke of his departed friend, Temple; he described the circumstances under which their friendship had commenced; he declared his many obligations to Temple; he spoke also of his illness; of their journey towards Thursley; and of Temple’s affecting death. He concluded by entreating that he might be permitted never to return to college; and begging that his father’s pleasure might be made known to him.—Having folded up the letter, he enclosed the list, which he had made with Temple’s assistance, of his

bills, and which he had with him in his writing case, and directed the packet to Sir George Montague.

“ It is well that I have really written that letter !” said Montague to himself the next morning.

He had sat up till a very late hour, and awoke before day-break, fatigued and dispirited. The excitement and enthusiasm which supported him during the evening had died away, and, now, images of shame, and disgrace from exposure, alone presented themselves. He looked round the chamber as he lay, and the dusk heavy shadows of a wintry morning (which the faint cold light made dimly visible) pressed like a weight upon him. He shut his eyes, and half buried his face in the pillow ; and, in the dreary sickening of his heart, almost wished that he might never wake again. But he did wake again, calm and refreshed by sweet slumbers ; and the cheerful radiance of an unclouded sun filled the room. He had been awakened by the peaceful sabbath bells ; and as he lay and listened to them, dear and soothing memories

wakened within him, and filled his eyes with quiet tears. And now, he thought no more of the disgrace of being exposed before man : he sighed to think that he had cared little to sin under the eye of the heart-searching God ; and he blessed God, humbly and deeply, that he had been enabled to make a full confession to his father.

That day was, indeed, a sabbath to him. He rested in spirit, and was refreshed. He found enjoyment in the public and social exercises of devotion : and to one who had for so long a time been hopeless and disquieted, such enjoyment brought with it peace ; “ that peace which the world cannot give.”

Augustine had purposely delayed sending his letter by the Sunday’s post : he wished to lay it before his venerable friend ; and on Monday morning, soon after breakfast was over, he entered Mr. Temple’s study with the letter in his hand.

“ It is right that you should know me as I am, my dear sir,” he said. “ You know not what I have been ; this letter will tell you. I will leave it with you.”

When Mr. Temple returned the letter to Augustine, he pressed his hand warmly : he said but a few words. “ May *He* strengthen, establish, settle you.”

The letter was sent.

CHAPTER XI.

A DAY or two after, Augustine was surprised to meet his former acquaintance, Villiers. He was riding with the young countess, whom he introduced to Montague as his first cousin. Montague was charmed with the manners of the countess, and accepted, without hesitation, an invitation to dine at Fountain Royal, on the following day.

Augustine ambled quietly along through the lanes and woods which separate Thursley from Fountain Royal. The night was chill and dark, and the hoarse wind swept by him, blowing the wintry sleet into his face. He was at once ushered through a suite of splendid apartments into the presence of the countess, and the change to brilliant light and warm perfumed air was almost magical to him. She was conversing earnestly with an old gentleman, one of the many guests with whom her house was filled.—The apartment in which she was sitting might have been

called a boudoir, but that its furniture, though rich, was simple in its style, and there were few of those ornaments and trinkets which usually adorn a lady's boudoir. The walls were of a rich, but delicate shade of pale red, with very broad, flat mouldings of frosted gold, all studded with burnished stars. There was but one picture in the room—one of Titian's matchless portraits!—a lady in a dress of green velvet; her soft auburn hair loosely gathered up with a golden bodkin. She seemed young, but touched with some secret sorrow. The expression of her large hazel eyes was a soft melancholy; her cheek was colourless, but the rose-hues of her delicately formed lips were the brightest in the whole picture. A white rose was on her bosom, yet the clear skin seemed of a more pearly whiteness. Besides this picture, were two busts, the size of life, placed on plinths of yellow marble. One, a female head, the countenance calm and regular, with vine leaves and clusters intermingled with the curling hair, and hanging heavily round the brow and delicate features, the clearness of the

alabaster giving lightness to its rich masses. The other, a head of Psyche in Parian marble—a countenance full of mournful but intellectual loveliness. Tall, slender tripods of the richest *or molu* were placed at regular distances round the room: from the summit of which, a soft but brilliant light was shed by lamps of ground glass, in shape like etruscan vases. Curtains of rich amber silk were looped back from the windows by golden cords, and the windows all thrown open into what seemed an enchanted garden. Myrtles were there, tall and spreading as trees; and the common, but very beautiful geranium had completely embowered one of the windows with its dark, fragrant leaves and scarlet blossoms. The shrubs and flowers, indeed, were not rare, but they were all healthy and luxuriant, and arranged with an art which reminded one of nature. The red Provins' rose and the Persian lilac were growing among hyacinths and lilies of the valley; and there were large beds of violets and pinks, and orange trees in full blossom.

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elegance of every inanimate object around him, he could scarcely believe that he had ever seen so lovely a creature as the countess herself. With a form and features, slight and delicate in no common degree, she had all that fine frankness of expression and manner, which, in a person of refinement, betokens true nobility. Her hair, glossy and black as the raven's wing, was parted high above her clear smooth brow, and a few natural curls fell even to her cheek: the shape of her head was remarkably fine, and what is called, well placed upon her shoulders. Her dress, the produce of some eastern loom, was simple though uncommon, of the darkest shade of blue, stamped with a strange pattern of grotesque figures and narrow waves of gold, the loose folds confined at the waist and wrists with a belt and bracelets of solid gold. She wore no other ornaments, except a long and glittering chain of beaten gold, with a cross of large turquoises suspended to it. She turned gracefully to Augustine, when he appeared, and presented him to her venerable companion. She then entered at once into

conversation with them both, and Augustine became soon so interested in a discussion on the Italian school of painters, that when the countess ceased speaking, he started with astonishment to find that many other persons had entered the apartment.

At dinner, he was placed near Lady C——, but he turned round and gazed with astonishment on the lady who sat on the other side of him; and whom he had scarcely noticed before, when he had been generally introduced to those present. She appeared between sixty and seventy, though attired like a much younger woman. Lady Arabella de Roos might have been once a pretty woman, but memory and vanity seemed to have banished truth from her acquaintance, and to have succeeded in persuading her that she was still both young and lovely. She had preserved a sort of plumped-up figure, which was made the most of by her dress-makers; and over which a gown of some delicate and nameless shade of lilac was shaped and fitted with such an uncreased tightness that all its projections and recesses were most ungrace-

fully displayed. Her arms were bare, and her neck and bosom most unpleasantly revealed beneath the light pelerine of lace which partly shaded them. The head of some young foreign peasant-girl had probably supplied the rich bouffant curls which rose tier above tier around her face ; and her poor, old crazy head was adorned with a profusion of blond and roses of the palest pink. But though Lady Arabella was so preposterously ridiculous in her outward garb, Augustine was surprised and entertained to find her conversation full of shrewdness and anecdote. She had mingled in some of the choicest society of the times ; had travelled much on the continent ; had resided, indeed, at the foreign courts ; and was thought a very agreeable, clever woman. In fact, she had some observation, great knowledge of the world, and profound tact. But, had all the flimsy finery of her manner been removed, her mind would have been found fearfully unprincipled, and her heart corrupted, and the whole bent of her thoughts and desires, to use the plain, well-known vulgar tongue, turned to “the pomps and

vanities of this wicked world." And, alas ! *she* was the aunt and companion of the lovely countess, and had been her guardian and her guide from early youth.

"I think I had the pleasure of being acquainted with your grandmother, Lady Elizabeth Montague," said Lady Arabella (turning to Augustine with a smile) "a long time ago ! when I was a mere child. Is she quite well ? She now resides, I believe, generally in London ; but I have heard that she sees very few persons, and has quite given up the world."

"She has, indeed !" replied Augustine. "She is wholly devoted to religious exercises. I think, too absorbed by them. She is, however, very charitable to the poor and friendless."

"Ah ! she is very good, I doubt not," replied Lady Arabella, "and perhaps she is right after all. I was myself very much struck by what Irving said the other day about 'coming out from the world.' You remember his words, though I forget them, dear Adelaide !"

"What did you say, madam?" cried the countess, who had been conversing with a gentleman on the other side of the table.

"Do you recollect the words which Irving used, when we last heard him, about retiring from the world?"

"No, indeed I do not, though you know I am a great admirer of Irving," and she smiled as she said so.

"You an admirer of Irving, Lady C.!" exclaimed a grave-looking man, with a harsh but sensible countenance.

"By that look and that tone," she replied, "*you*, certainly, are *not*."

"No, indeed I am not! and I will give you my reasons."

"Ah! I see we shall not agree," she said, gaily; "so don't attempt to turn me; for, to tell you the truth, I do not mean to change my opinion. I am prejudiced in my admiration."

"I am sorry to find Lady C. so infatuated," he said, lowering his voice, as he addressed himself to her aunt; and Augustine heard the versatile old lady reply also, in a subdued

voice, "Oh! a mere whim of Lady C.'s! It's the fashion now to talk of preaching! and, to tell you the truth, I'm heartily tired of preachers and preaching. There was that inflated fanatic, Malan, raising quite a commotion in Geneva, when we were there; but my niece had not then the curiosity to hear him."

Here her attention was attracted by the loud, emphatic voice of a young man in black, who was telling a ludicrous story about a methodist parson; at which every one laughed excepting Villiers and Augustine. They were both displeased by the manner in which the story was told. But the old gentleman with gray hair seemed convulsed with laughter; and he had also a story of the same sort to tell, though in a far better style.

"Excellent! capital!" cried the young man in black.

"I do not quite agree with you, sir," said Villiers. "Poor fellows! I am rather inclined to believe those illiterate methodists are generally sincere; and, however mistaken

persons may be in their opinions, I always respect *sincerity*."

"I must differ from you on that point," said the white haired man; "I cannot think them sincere. It is their absurd cant I object to."

"Persons talk a great deal about the cant of religious professors," said Augustine, smiling as he looked up; "but I think there is a cant almost as objectionable in persons who do not profess to be religious. What think you of the cant of sentiment? the cant of the fashionable world, which if the most superior person does not understand, he is sneered at by the silly set? or the cant of the sporting world, which, though vulgar and low-lived in no common degree, many of our English gentlemen pride themselves on using? Or, again, the cant of our schools of poetry, which is often sickening to plain common sense? Or the cant of infidelity (the most common cant of all), and as pitiable and ridiculous as it is infamous?"

But here the Countess, seeing a frown on

several faces, thought it best to rise, and led away her train of ladies. But little wine, and that, chiefly claret, was drank after the ladies had retired; and Augustine, not being near enough to Villiers to converse freely with him, was pleased when their summons came.

"I am glad you are come," said the Countess to Villiers, as the gentlemen entered the drawing-room; "for really (with the exception of Lady Arabella, whose powers of agreeable conversation seem never to fail her) we have been all sitting like the ladies whom Corinne mentions in her description of an English party in the country, scarcely opening our lips; and I must beg, that now the gentlemen have made their appearance, they will not herd together to talk about any subject which cannot interest us."

"Do not suspect us of such barbarism," said Augustine, who was standing next to Villiers; "but if we should prove very dull, very unentertaining; rather believe that we presume upon the privilege you grant us in permitting us again to enjoy your society: for when a man enters a drawing-room, which

is a lady's territory, he is hopeless of amusing, and only hopes to be amused."

"Your presumption," replied the Countess, "is meant to look like gallantry; but really, if our society is so very charming, it should make you forget your set compliments; and rather communicate to you some of that power of entertaining, which you attribute to our sex. But do tell me, Charles!" she continued, in a lower voice (turning to her cousin) "what am I to do with these people? I would have music, but then one must listen to those three Miss Manvers, which indeed I cannot do in pity to my guests! Lady Arabella wishes for cards."

"Oh! do not have cards," cried Villiers, eagerly; "or let Lady Arabella take three of the heaviest of the party, and retire with them to the solemn silliness of a whist table for the evening. Do not be so anxious to amuse your guests; leave them to amuse one another? Any thing but cards for the younger part of the company, dear Adelaide!—See," he continued, looking round, "they are beginning to be very agreeable! Lady Julia,

who looked half asleep when we entered the room, has lifted up her fair head, and really finds entertainment in listening to that unwearied proser, Sir Richard N. And two of the Miss Manvers have opened that large folio of engravings.—Aye! and hither comes the youngest, to flirt with me, I do believe.”

Miss Dorothea Manvers was a slight pale creature, with a very timid manner, but a boldness and perseverance of purpose which nothing could daunt.

“Dear Lady C.” she almost whispered, “are we not to hear your delightful voice to-night? Lydia has been so wishing for that charming song, ‘*La plus jolie*,’ she thinks you sing it quite as well as Caradori!”

When Lady C. had declared her readiness to obey the wish of Miss Lydia, Miss Dorothea opened her large eyes, and simpered, and hesitated; and at length said, timidly: “Only, pray don’t ask me to sing to-night? I feel so very timid, I don’t think I could sing a note.”

Lady C. made no remark, but Miss Dorothea continued, (opening her eyes widely,

and looking round like a startled deer) "at least, I'm sure I shall not feel bold enough, till they are all attending to something else. Ah! I see Lady Arabella is arranging a quiet little whist party," and she drew nearer to the Countess, and looked up in her face, and said: "Mr. Villiers sings also, I believe?" and then she blushed, and clung to the arm of Lady C., and looked up intreatingly to him; Villiers bowed, and smiled, and said something which meant nothing.

"I always think that this is the prettiest music room I ever entered," said Miss Dorothea, (as one of the footmen drew aside the rich, crimson curtains, which alone divided it from the saloon where the company were assembled). She passed through the stately arch, and entered the apartment with as much gentle fearfulness, as if she had been stealing into some region which she had never explored till then.

The room was surrounded by pillars of white polished marble, and seemed to represent an open pavilion. The concave ceiling was painted like an Italian sky; the walls,

between the pillars, were also painted by a master's hand; and glowed with the rich and gorgeous colouring of Italian scenery. There were the trees Claude loved to paint, with long waving festoons of the vine, hanging from branch to branch, and groups of gay peasants dancing in the chequered shade. In the distance were woodlands, and blue shadowy mountains, all softened with the aerial haze of an Italian climate. On one side a valley opened upon the sea, where the small waves seemed to dance and sparkle with gladness beneath the golden sunbeams, while here and there on the very edge of the clear horizon, the eye caught a little snowy sail.

"Shall I sing '*La plus jolie* ?'" said Lady C. as she sat down to the pianoforte, and every one joyfully called upon her to do so. Her voice was peculiarly rich and powerful, but she threw a clear and delicate sweetness into every note; and gave to every little word a distinct and finished pronunciation; and sang with such a charming playfulness, that the hearer alternately wondered at the skill, and the perfect simplicity of the performance.

When the song was finished, some remarks were made on French *romances*. The Countess turned from the instrument, and an animated conversation commenced on the different styles of national music. Augustine thought, as he listened to the Countess, that he had seldom heard any one converse so agreeably. Miss Dorothea, however, with all her timidity, was very anxious to *prove* to those around her how *unwilling* she was to sing; she had listened like one in a hurry to the conversation, and stolen at times a glance from under her languishing eyelids upon the music stool, from which the Countess had not yet risen. At last she took advantage of a pause in the conversation, and laying her hand on the arm of Lady C. she said, "One more song! I know you sing Handel, divine Handel!"

"Indeed I could not attempt to do so to-night," replied the Countess.

"Well then, that wild, melancholy air in Nina!"

"I don't know which you mean," she said; "but I assure you," and she laughed as she

spoke, "I could not sing any doleful ditties to-night, I am in so mirthful a mood!"

"But you *will* sing one more song?"

"Oh! certainly," she replied. "Give me my harp, Charles, and I will reward you by singing one of your own compositions."

Villiers placed the harp before her. The whole room resounded with the light and joyous prelude, as her fingers flew over the strings. Then suddenly she glided into an air that was almost plaintive; and she began to sing—

O let my wildly plaintive lay
Those wayward, anxious thoughts beguile;
Be calm—be more than calm, be gay—
'Tis I who bid thee, Annot Lyle.

Of former times my harp shall tell,
You must—you will, attend the while:
Dear Allan, you remember well,
How you first met poor Annot Lyle;

You saw the boldest outlaws fall
Around me in the dark defile,
But heard the trembling orphan's cry,
And spared the life of Annot Lyle.

Nay, Allan, do not murmur so,
Let weaker minds their lot revile;
Ay! but you must one smile bestow,
And join the mirth of Annot Lyle.

No wondrous powers to me belong,
I own no magic fairy wile;
The clairsheer's note, the artless song,
Are all the spells of Annot Lyle.

Yet, I have chased the falling shade,
I see, I see the rising smile:
Yes, Allan, I must be obeyed,
You cannot frown on Annot Lyle.

When the sweet song was finished, Miss Dorothea was the loudest in her plaudits, and she leaned forward, and turned over the leaves of the music book, and spoke such little sentences as these, "Ah, that is the most beautiful air!—Do you like this thing of Rossini? I am sure you sing this."

At last, however, notwithstanding many a pretty "yea" and "nay," she was prevailed upon to sing; and she sang with her sister, Miss Lydia (as most young ladies do), a very long and difficult duet, in which now and then such a word as "cor," or "amore," or "mio,"

or "sospiri," was just distinguished. An English song followed, almost as inexplicable as the Italian. In the midst of this song, Lady Arabella and Lady Julia entered together, and the former whispered to the Countess, that Lady Julia had come expressly to ask Mr. Villiers to sing a Spanish song, the very song Augustine had been so delighted with, when he first met Villiers at Cambridge. Villiers was in high spirits, and he turned round to ask the Countess to accompany him. She had left the room. "I think Lady C—— is in the next room," said Miss Dorothea. "I saw her steal away thither. I will go and bring her back again."

Villiers bowed his thanks, for he could not well avoid replying to some remarks which Lady Julia Headingham was making.

"Lady C—— is so very sorry that she cannot come," cried Miss Dorothea, returning; "she cannot leave the card table: but she has requested me to play the accompaniment for you, Mr. Villiers! She says I shall find the song in a little music book with a green cover. Will you be so kind as to look

for it, sir?" addressing Montague. A little green book! She said it was among these books." And she stooped down, and searched among a number of music books scattered upon the floor.

Perhaps Villiers was not pleased with Miss Dorothea as a substitute, for as soon as she had delivered her message, his countenance and manner changed; and although the accompaniment was very well played, he sang most wretchedly.

When Augustine returned to the drawing-room he understood why Villiers had become vexed and melancholy so suddenly, and he no longer wondered that his friend had so earnestly objected to cards. The Countess, as Miss Dorothea had declared, was at cards, and he could scarcely believe, when he gazed upon her, that he beheld the same gentle, artless creature, who had even in her light playfulness seemed one of the most innocent of her sex.

She who sat at the card table appeared a very different person. The restless glancing of her eyes—her impatient manner—her

quick, sarcastic words, were shocking to him. Her very cheek and brow were deeply flushed, and her bosom heaved with that feverish excitement which few but the wretched gamester knows, as she eagerly gathered up the gold which she had won.

He could not bear to look upon her; but as he turned away, his glance met that of Villiers, and he saw that his feelings were read. His friend, however, approached him. "Some of them are still in the music room," he said.

Montague followed him thither; but there, without exchanging another word, he grasped the hand of Villiers, and departed.

CHAPTER XII.

THERE was a small church about three miles from Thursley, at the farther end of a little hamlet, in which Divine service was performed only once in the month. The duty was undertaken by the minister of Thursley. For some months Mr. Temple had procured a substitute, but he was now he thought sufficiently recovered (though in fact he was still far from strong) to resume his attendance at the little solitary church. When Augustine awoke on the Sabbath morning, he saw that it was raining heavily; he settled in his own mind that Mr. Temple would not think of going to the solitary church on that day, but he determined to go.

“*You* will not venture out on such a morning as this?” said Augustine to Charlotte, when she appeared in her walking dress.

“O! yes, I am going, I assure you,” she replied. “I do not fear the weather; besides, Father! I am well fenced from the rain

should it continue." She replied to her Father's grave remonstrances, and to Augustine's reasonings, with a delightful playfulness, and she went.

The vaults in this little church had been, from time immemorial, the burying-place of the C—— family; and before the service began, Augustine employed himself in surveying the stately monuments of the lords and dames of the noble house of C——. He was, however, soon called away by Charlotte, who pointed in silence to her Father, as he was entering the reading desk. The congregation, partly owing to the inclement weather, was on that day unusually scanty; but while Augustine listened to the earnest, simple pleadings of the aged pastor, and beheld the few poor women who were alone present, wrapped up in their red cloaks,—every face turned with rapt attention towards the holy man, as if they were fearful to lose the faintest accent from his lips; and when he glanced his eye upon the spacious pews of the C—— family, all unoccupied, and upon the cold, proud monuments of their ancestors, he felt

how true it was that the poor had the gospel preached unto *them*. Mr. Temple did indeed preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, in the spirit of Him, "who spake as never man spake." His hearers felt that he was himself deeply interested in all that he declared to them. His manner was grave, mild, and affectionate ; but even on that day, with those few ignorant hearers, and in that little desolate church, as he reasoned with them of 'righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,' and entreated them to be saved through Him who is the only way of salvation, his voice faltered, and tears fell fast over his pale cheeks.

"I could scarcely help wondering," said Augustine to him when the sermon was over, "to see you so agitated, in this little church, with only those poor ignorant persons. I should not have been surprised, had you preached in the midst of a large congregation. Dear sir ! I wish I could be like you !"

Mr. Temple took his hand, and clasping it warmly in his own, "My dear young friend," he said, "is not one soul so very precious?"

"Would you like to see the family vault

of the C—— family?" said Charlotte, observing that Montague had returned to the monuments. "If you would, I will ask my father for the key.—Here, take it," she said (putting the large key into his hand), as they stopped before a low door of solid oak, braced with iron, on one side of the chancel, "I could not turn it in the lock." They descended a few steps, and Montague unlocked the door. They entered a large crypt, the roof of which was much ornamented with gothic carving. One little narrow window, unglazed, but iron-barred, let a dim gloomy light into the vault, and faintly revealed the many rows of coffins.

"This is an awful place!" said Augustine. "What a short time, since the corrupting tenant of that coffin," and he pointed to one on which the crimson velvet and the gilded bosses were still fresh and unsullied, and where the coronet glimmered upon the top almost as brightly as when it had been first laid there, "what a short time since the lifeless form within was moving in all the splendour and the rank which now attend the present Countess! I see by the inscription

that this coffin contains the corpse of her sister, who has been dead scarcely three years. I tremble for that young and beautiful creature, who is now clothed in purple and fine linen, and lives in so many luxurious and sumptuous pleasures. I cannot bear to think of the time when they will bring hither that now radiant form. I cannot associate her with this dark, fearful place, with its profound stillness—with its dead, icy chillness. I never thought of her danger as I do now I am come hither. Do you imagine that she has ever stood where we are now standing, or even visited in thought this fearful place, to meditate on the truth, which few may *heed* but all *must experience*, that our life is but as a vapour which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away?"

Charlotte did not answer—she did not hear him,—she was deep in thought, standing near the narrow window; and Augustine felt, as he fixed his gaze earnestly on her grave, sweet countenance, and thought upon the life she led—her watchfulness and prayers, her never-failing charity, her pure and living

faith, that even from that charnel-house the mind might go back with her to the most joyous seasons of her mortal existence, and not tremble for her.

“ I almost wonder,” exclaimed Charlotte, when the pause of their silence had been broken, “ that any creature born to die can choose to bring all this pomp of velvet, and rich ornament, and these tokens of worldly rank, into the very chambers of the dead. Read this short epitaph. The humble stone is oddly placed, is it not ?” and she pointed to the window near which she was standing. Augustine stood beside her, and read the epitaph. The tombstone was in the church-yard without, but it had been by chance so placed that the inscription presented itself full in the sight of any person gazing from the window of the vault beneath. It was from Leighton’s Commentary on St. Peter.

“ The things are passing which we enjoy,
And we are passing who enjoy them.”

Augustine had looked forward, day after

day, with much anxiety for his father's reply to his last letter. At length the long expected answer came; and, to his astonishment and joy, it contained not a harsh word. His mother had not written, as he had feared she would—the letter was entirely from his Father. It was serious and expostulatory; but it assured him of his Parents' forgiveness, and declared that they believed the deep humility and grief which he expressed to be sincere; and that they restored him to their confidence. His Father highly approved his wish not to return to Cambridge; and said that he had written to his tutor, enclosing the list of his bills, to make arrangements for their payment. He mentioned at the end of the letter that they were then at Cheltenham, and that his son might either join his parents there, or meet them in about a month from that time at Kirkdale Manor.

Augustine was deeply touched with the conduct of his father. He knew that he had not deserved such generous treatment; and his parents saw from the letter, which they received in immediate reply, that their son's

heart was really humbled. All his early confidence flowed back to them; and even his mother confessed, that she was satisfied with the confessions and promises with which his letter was filled. She wept as, in language at once fraught with contrition and anxious affection, he entreated the prayers of his father and mother that the resolutions which in humble confidence he had made might never be broken: that he might never cease to feel his own weakness and sinfulness, and so never cease, also, to watch and to pray against every temptation. She fully approved his wish not to meet them till after their departure from Cheltenham, as he mentioned having heard from Mr. Villiers that some of the most dissipated of his former companions were residing there. This fact was confirmed to them by the card of a Mr. Harrison having been left at their door a few days before, with an inquiry after Mr. Montague: the said Mr. Harrison being then noted in Cheltenham for his profligacy, in conjunction with some other well-known characters of that place.

“ That Mr. Temple must be a very good man !” said Sir George, while his wife was folding up Augustine’s letter. “ I am very glad that our son has made such an acquaintance.”

“ I have heard Mr. Cramp and his nephew both speak in high terms of Mr. William Temple, Augustine’s late friend,” replied Lady Montague ; “ and from Augustine’s present conduct, I certainly think highly of the parents. And though, I must confess, I much wished to see Augustine with us, as he used to be before he left us for that seat of sin, Cambridge, I think he may remain with benefit in Mr. Temple’s society.”—By some chance, Augustine had omitted any mention of Miss Temple in his letters.

A few evenings after he had received his father’s letter, Augustine was walking with Mr. Temple and his daughter to see a celebrated ruin at a short distance from Thursley. The weather was unusually lovely ; the trees all bright with the tender leaves of spring ; and the whole face of the earth beginning to wear its hues of gladness. “ I

often think," said Charlotte, "that we do not prize the open air as we ought. We can be content to pass day after day in our dull, close houses; forgetting the liberty, the joy, yes, and the comforts, which the skill of man cannot provide."

"But you forget our variable climate," said Augustine, "which renders even dull, close houses very pleasant places."

"Yes, but we do not enjoy the open air even when we may. For instance, I would not have you come hither in wintry weather, when you would have found only the hard snow for a seat; and when the cutting wind would have whistled sharply through the bare branches: but now this bank is cushioned with thick moss, and violets and primroses are blooming about it; and now all the nakedness of winter has disappeared, and every little glade is curtained and covered in by the rich green foliage. Nay, the sunbeams which have brought back all this beauty to the lately barren boughs, will soon be only permitted to peep into these leafy cells; for nature always keeps some pleasant places for

those who love to bear her company ; and when the sun shines too fiercely, she spreads a thicker shade to screen him off, or only lets in a little star of light to play upon the flowery carpet, and remind one that he is shining in all his summer splendour without."

" And all this fine poetical speech is to make us linger in this pleasant copse," said Mr. Temple, and he gently touched the glowing cheek of his daughter with his fingers.

" Perhaps it is," she said, and pressed his hand to her lips. " Or no, let me lead you on a little farther to a favourite nook of mine, half way up the hill above us, and there I should like to sit down ; for I am sure you may rest there, dear father, without catching cold. There the sun has been shining for hours upon the grass, and we shall find a seat upon the twisted roots of those immense fir-trees ; and then you may help me to gather a large nosegay of violets for my mother, Mr. Montague ! I passed there this morning, and saw a bank literally purple with them."

They proceeded along the little path, following Charlotte towards the spot of which she had spoken; but when about to cross over the road, beyond which rose the beautiful and wooded hill, they saw with surprise a carriage approaching at full speed. The horses were evidently running away, and the coachman had been thrown from his seat. Augustine sprang forward, and with great dexterity, though at the risk of his life, he seized the horses, and stopped them in a few moments. He was soon joined by some men from a field near the road, whom Mr. Temple had called to his assistance. They now recognised the carriage of the Countess of C. One of the doors was open, and on looking in they found Lady Arabella de Roos (who had fallen in a fainting fit) lying at the bottom. She was lifted out, and placed on the bank by the road side, under the care of Mr. Temple and his daughter, while Montague flew along the road in the direction from which the horses had come. About a quarter of a mile farther on, he beheld the object of his search stretched upon the hard

road. There lay the almost lifeless body of the young Countess. He lifted her tenderly from the ground, and a cold shudder ran through him, as he beheld her white arm fall broken by her side, and discovered that she had received some dreadful injury on her head. He was turning, utterly perplexed what to do, when Charlotte came to his assistance. With a calmness and gentleness perfectly admirable, she instantly bandaged up the broken arm; but her lip quivered with anguish when she looked steadily upon the face of the Countess. Quickly, however, she repressed her feelings, and, turning to Montague, said, "Can you bleed?"

He did not answer, but shook his head and groaned.

"Have you a lancet?—A penknife?"

He offered a penknife; and, with a countenance like death, but with a firm hand, the young girl opened a vein in the pulseless temple. A few drops of dark blood stained the ivory forehead, but they did not trickle even for a moment. Alas! it was a dreadful sight to behold the still beautiful but dis-

figured form, which lay so helpless and calm upon the lap of the young maiden. Charlotte sat there (while Augustine hastened to seek further assistance) almost hopeless what to do, and yet anxious to leave no effort she could make untried. She pushed back the thick silken hair, and chafed the marble forehead; she placed her trembling hand over the warm side, to feel if the heart beneath still beat; she removed from the small slender hand the dust which it had gathered in its grasp when falling; she smoothed with modest care the rich folds of whitest silk about the delicate limbs; and, lastly, she pressed her own rosy mouth to the pale parted lips, and hoped with her warm balmy breath to recall the life which had ceased to hover there; and all the while her tears fell in large drops over the face and upon the bosom, on which a chain of rubies shone with all their usual lustre, as if to mock the dreadful change which had been made: and all the while her thoughts were instant in prayer for the pale lifeless creature, who had lost all power of praying for herself.

When the coachman had been thrown from his seat, the horses had set off at their full speed ; and the poor Countess, frantic with terror, disregarded all the entreaties of her companion that she would sit perfectly still, and wait for a chance of safety. She had succeeded in opening the door, and had thrown herself out headlong. Her right arm had fallen under her and been broken, and a concussion of the brain had taken place. The beautiful and noble heiress, whom, at that moment, half the county envied as the happiest and most favoured among them, was laid, a disfigured corpse, upon the miserable bed of one of her poorest tenants.

The Countess and Lady Arabella had been on their way to a splendid dinner-party, a few miles from Fountain Royal. Their only attendant was a servant on horseback, who, on account of the narrowness of the road along which they were to pass, had ridden forward to remove any impediments in the way. Finding that the carriage did not follow, he had returned in time to be the first sent for medical assistance ; but all medical assistance was vain.

The day fixed for the funeral of the deceased Countess arrived ; the arrangements of which had been left to Villiers by the new Earl, then in France. Mr. Temple had been requested to perform the solemn service for the dead, and Augustine was invited to attend.

Mr. Temple appeared very low and agitated when they met at breakfast that morning ; and Augustine feared that he would be scarcely equal to the undertaking. He was rising to quit the breakfast-table, when a letter was put into his hand. Mr. Temple, as his custom was, took out his spectacles, very leisurely fitted them on, and proceeded to read his letter. His wife thought him unusually long in reading the first page, and she said : “ May I ask from whom that letter is, my dear ? ”

He looked up gravely in his wife’s face, and seemed not to hear her ; but when she repeated her question, he rose up and replied, as he left the room : “ I will show you the letter, of course, my love. I have no secrets from you ; or you either, sweet one,” he

added, and kissed the cheek of his daughter, who sat watching his looks with anxious affection.

“Do go to your father, my dear child,” said Mrs. Temple to Charlotte. “I heard him enter his study. I fear he has received some bad news; for he has been away so long a time, that I am quite uneasy.”

Charlotte came back immediately, saying, that the study door was locked, but that her father had spoken to her with a very cheerful voice.

Mr. Temple appeared a few minutes after, calm and more cheerful than he had seemed for days; and he took his wife’s hand between his own, and said, that he could not well speak on the subject of the letter till after his return from the funeral, as it would lead to much conversation.

“But are you uneasy, dearest?” asked the tender wife.

“Indeed I am not,” and he smiled. “And as for the letter, you shall read it yourself after dinner.”

Augustine was struck by the conduct and

manner of Mr. Temple. Some new impulse had evidently arisen within him. He had not been acquainted with him before his son's death, and he was evidently in very delicate health; but suddenly he had begun to discover a firmness and unfailing cheerfulness of mind and demeanour that was new to Augustine. "Some joyful event has certainly happened," thought Augustine; "and he will not mention it when seriousness and sorrow are so natural: he is right to wait till this sad funeral is over."

The body of the young Countess had been laid in state for many days, and it happened that the room in which the coffin had been placed was that in which Augustine had found her sitting when he dined at Fountain Royal. The character of the apartment was changed, for it was hung entirely with black; but he recognised the tripods of or-molu, and the same lamps of dull glass. When last he stood there, those very lamps shed their soft, brilliant light on one rich in all the charms of health and beauty—now the room was darkened; and as he came from the pure day-

light, they seemed to cast a red and lurid glare over the shapeless coffin in which the clay-cold corpse was laid. In vain did he try to banish the idea; but he could not drive from his mind the image of the Countess, as he had last seen her in those splendid rooms. Now she appeared conversing, the eloquence of her mind speaking in her fine countenance; now bending her white and swan-like neck over her harp: then, and he shuddered, her eyes seemed fixed with restless eagerness upon the horrid card-table.

He saw the coffin, all rich with velvet and gold, placed in its last resting-place—the cold, desolate vault. “And I have seen the last now!” he said to himself, and turned away. “This, this is the ending of that lovely vision which came across me but a few short weeks ago, in the full meridian of its beauty and its splendour!”

CHAPTER XIII.

“Now, my love!” said Mrs. Temple to her husband, “you will show me the letter.”

They were sitting together in the old library of the parsonage, the windows of which looked upon the trim garden, laid out in the old-fashioned style, with broad gravel walks, and yew hedges as thick and straight and high as solid walls. Charlotte had been arranging some flowers in a large glass jar: she was now standing at the open window, gathering up the white petals which had fallen from an orange-tree full of blossoms and fruit. The tree was a remarkably fine one, and had been sent her by the poor Countess not many days before her death.

Mr. Temple replied to his wife, and promised to read the letter aloud immediately; but Charlotte had not heard them speak. Her father came behind her and said, “You are thinking very deeply, my child!”

Charlotte started, and she was obliged to recal the sound of his words before she could consider their sense.

“ Not very deeply, dear father, but I was certainly thoughtful. I was thinking how fresh and beautiful every thing looks this evening, just as when the Countess died ; all but the petals of this orange-tree, her own gift ; and then the remembrance of her death came over me like a strange, unnatural dream.”

“ I am going to turn your attention to another subject. Do you remember a promise which I made this morning, Charlotte ?”

“ Yes ! certainly I do, father : you are about to perform it now—to read that letter !”

Charlotte sat down beside her mother.

“ Pray remain with us, Montague,” said Mr. Temple. “ You are welcome to hear all the information which this mysterious letter contains. It is simply this—We must prepare to leave our happy home. My rector, who had been for some time in an infirm state of health, died yesterday ; and, although the late Countess had promised me the living on his long-expected death, I must lose it ;

for she has never made a will in which her intentions respecting me might have been mentioned."

"But the present Earl well knows what her intentions were, my dear father!" said Charlotte.

"Yes; and the present Earl dislikes me, I fear. Nay, I know from the Countess herself that the Earl applied to her for the promise of this living for his former tutor, Dr. Meriton. I have little doubt, that by this time the Earl has given him the living."

Charlotte felt her mother's hand tremble in her own. She looked in her face, and her feelings overcame her: she burst into tears.

"Our sweet comforter must not forget her office," said Mr. Temple; and Charlotte instantly lifted up her face (all bathed in tears as it was), and, throwing her arms round her mother's neck, kissed her repeatedly. Then, wiping her tears away, "Look, dear mamma!" she said, "what an example my father gives us! This trial has brought with it, from the best and kindest hand, new strength, new

hope, new comfort : and as our day is, so shall our strength be."

" I know it is right : I pray that it may be blessed to us, my own child," replied Mrs. Temple : " but I feel it so very deeply ! You are young ; and your heart is full of hopes, and cannot feel, as we must, what it is to be turned out of our quiet home in our old age ; and to be obliged to go forth again among new faces, and form new habits and new connexions."

" I know that I cannot feel it so deeply as you do, dearest ! but I am sure," replied Charlotte, with a modest firmness that delighted Augustine, " I am sure that this trial is a blessing for us. For my own part, I feel that I cannot be kept too watchful. I cannot be too often reminded of the uncertainty of every thing concerning this life : and this present trial seems scarcely an affliction, when I look forward to times that must come, over which man has no control. I do not wish those times to meet me unprepared, when I must stand by your bed-side, and by the bed-side

of my own dear father, and hear the last words your lips will ever speak, and see the last looks of your dear eyes turned to me. I know that whether I watch, or whether I slumber, these times must come, and that the days of darkness are many, and many will be the trials I must meet before my own awful summons to eternity. But with the constant thought of these certainties present to our minds, we may be very happy—aye, happier than those who think not of them, till they come suddenly, and force them to think. May we not, father?"

"We may indeed, dear child. The command is plain and simple. * 'Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.' And the promise made to them who keep that command is equally simple and sure: 'And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and mind through Christ Jesus.'"

* Philipp. iv. 6, 7.

“ Yes, you speak the truth,” said Mrs. Temple : “ I begin already to see that the slightest murmur would be sinful in us. I trust I have daily watched, lest I should be called to die, and depart unprepared. I trust that were the hour of death at hand, I should not murmur. Why then should a call, which is not to death, disturb me thus ? I ought to have watched for *this* event ; but I have been strangely secure and careless. Yes, dear William ! it will help us forward in the right way to have our habits of ease, and perhaps indulgence, interrupted. We should have been soon called to leave these harmless comforts, which we have enjoyed so long ; and let us go cheerfully ; for all things will work together for our good, if we love our Heavenly Father’s will.”

Montague went that very evening to his friend Villiers, to ask his influence with the Earl in favour of Mr. Temple ; and Villiers entered at once into his feelings, and kindly

wrote immediately, urging the intention and promise of the Countess. But two days after, a letter came from Dr. Meriton to Mr. Temple, announcing himself as Rector of Thursley, and signifying that the curate would be expected to vacate the parsonage in three months from that day, as Dr. Meriton intended to reside on his living.

Augustine had been, ever since the news of Mr. Temple's loss of Thursley, the most melancholy person at the parsonage. His head had been full of schemes, none of which, however, met his approval. Suddenly his manner changed, and the Temples could not help remarking that his former cheerfulness had returned. He dropped, at times, mysterious hints, or spoke in a very sanguine strain of some event which might happen.

The following letter may explain his behaviour :

“ My dearest mother—I see by the public papers that the living of Westerton is vacant by the death of its late incumbent, and I know that the presentation is in the gift of my grandmother, to whom I inclose a letter :

but may I ask the kind influence of yourself and my dear father, in behalf of Mr. Temple, whose prospects, owing to the death of Lady C—, have met with a very sudden change. He had always looked forward to possessing the living of Thursley ; but the Earl has disregarded the promise of the late Countess, and Mr. Temple will be obliged, in a quarter of a year, to quit even the curacy, which he has held for so many years. I suspect, from all that I can learn, that his own private fortune is very small indeed ; and as it is now so difficult to meet with a curacy, I fear that he and his wife will be obliged to give up many of those comforts, which at their age, and in their delicate state of health, have become almost necessary to them. I am delighted to think that Westerton is vacant, as I am sure you will approve my anxious desire to procure it for so exemplary a man as Mr. Temple. He has not an idea that I am writing to you on this subject : he has never mentioned Westerton to me, though I think he must have seen in the paper in whose gift the living is.

“ I have hesitated whether or not I should speak to you on another subject, which occupies many of my thoughts. After the noble and undeserved confidence which yourself and my father have reposed in me (unworthy as I have been of your regard), I cannot bear to conceal any thing from you ; and I wish to prove that I do indeed feel towards you as I did when I told my every thought to you. You know how dear and faithful a friend Mr. Temple's only son has been to me ; but had I never seen him, I should have loved his sweet sister. She is altogether the most perfect being I have ever met with ; and I feel myself ennobled by my attachment towards her. I will not attempt to describe her character to you. I only wish you and my father to see her, as I have seen her in her own family, and among the poor : to see her modest wisdom ; her mild firmness ; her perfect sweetness of temper ; and, in a word, her genuine piety : and I am certain you would feel as anxious as I am to receive her into our family. I have been perhaps rather premature in declaring my sentiments to her-

self, and I wish I could say she had encouraged them. I now only wait for the sanction of my father and yourself, to declare myself more fully, not only to herself, but to her parents. I had made up my mind, as at present we are both rather young, to delay my proposals; but it seems to me that this is the proper time; and that now, when they are in distress and perplexity, nay, almost in poverty, Mr. and Mrs. Temple, and Charlotte herself, will feel how disinterested in any worldly point of view my attachment is. I think I know you both well enough to be certain, that you will gladly embrace this opportunity to promote the happiness of your child. I think I know you well enough to be certain, that you will readily receive a portionless daughter. I have lately received a proof of your liberality as to money, which I can never forget. And now, my dearest mother, I will only beg you to believe me your truly affectionate and very dutiful son,

“ AUGUSTINE MONTAGUE.

“ Perhaps my father will be so kind as to write a few lines to Mr. Temple on this subject.”

And now, tell me, my reader, what think you of this letter? I do not mean of the manner, but of the matter of it; but as you cannot tell me your opinion, I will tell you mine. I call it a most decided proof that poor Augustine, manly as he looked, was a mere child as to knowledge of the world; ay, and that he did not know his father and mother half so well as I know them. Had the letter been written to old John Scott, I think *his* reply would have made his son very happy. But though Sir George, or rather Lady Montague, made as high a profession as that venerable Christian, the letter had a very different effect on them. There are two lines written by one* whose death has been a sad loss to all who knew either herself or her writings, which well describe the character of Sir George and Lady Montague:

“ Striving with pain in Zion’s paths to plod,
But keeping Mammon for their household god.”

Their wealth was great, and, on the death of Lady Elizabeth, would be immense; but

* Jane Taylor.

they looked upon that wealth as a reason why Augustine should marry a person of high rank and great riches. They considered that he had a claim to do so: and the idea of his uniting himself to the portionless daughter of an unknown country curate was insupportable. Augustine was also mistaken in attributing any remarkable liberality as to money, to his mother; for it happened, that instead of *approving* her husband's conduct towards her son, when he paid his debts, and restored the young man to his confidence, she had been at first highly incensed, and would fain have vented her displeasure in a letter very different from that which her husband wrote. But Sir George had roused himself, and for once taken his own way, and had insisted on her forbearing to interfere between himself and Augustine. Had Lady Montague been possessed of millions, she would not have possessed a liberal spirit. Whether it was that she had been early accustomed to the confined ideas of a money-getting and money-saving shop (not but there are many, many noble spirits behind a counter), or whether

(which I believe was the truth) she had naturally a narrow mind, which the true spirit of the gospel could alone have enlarged—certain it was, that with all her money, and all her consequence, and all her religion, she was still mean, cold, and worldly at heart. When poor Augustine's letter came, she read it in silence, and in silence she put it into her husband's hands; but the silence was that forced, unnatural calm which precedes a fearful storm; and so many were her comments, that not a line did the poor man read in peace.

“And now, Sir George,” she said, with a bitterness of tone and manner which made him shrug his shoulders, as if he dreaded some sharp blows upon them, “you see the consequence of your silly indulgence, of the confidence which you were pleased to place in this ridiculous boy of yours! I only wish I had determined to do what was right, and treated him as he deserved, after his infamous conduct at Cambridge. It is you who are to blame for the wicked encouragement you gave him.”

And thus she went on, till the poor man

(who was willing to purchase peace at any terms) walked away, begging her to act as she pleased, and secretly hoping that she would save him the trouble of breaking off all prospect of a connexion which he disliked almost as much as herself.

The first thing she did was to throw Augustine's letter to Lady Elizabeth into the fire: she then summoned Mr. Cramp to a conference, the fruit of which we shall soon see.

"My dear Augustine—I am not only astonished but shocked at your letter. Your poor father is perfectly confounded at your effrontery. He begs me to take upon myself the ungracious task of admonishing you. We never can, and never will countenance your proceedings while they continue what they are. As for your duplicity in declining to join us at this place, lest you should be drawn into any intercourse with your former *worst* *profligate* companions, it deserves the contempt with which I now regard it. What do we know of this Miss Temple, that should induce us to consent to your forming any

connexion with her or her family? I must say, that if we were to form an opinion by what we do know, that is, the arts by which they have drawn in an unsuspecting young man, our opinion would be as severe, as I fear it would be just.

“ But let me hope that when you receive this letter you will give me a proof that there is some truth in your fine promises. Give up at once, and for ever this disgraceful attachment, and set off, on the very day you receive this, to join us in London. We shall leave Cheltenham at six to-morrow morning, and (if we live) be in Park Lane the same evening. Obey us strictly in these requests, and you may hope to be received by an affectionate mother,

“ MARIA MONTAGUE.

“ P. S. In answer to your very strange application about the living of Westerton, I need only say, that we have written very strongly to Lady Elizabeth in favour of that truly pious and excellent young man, Mr. Tarver. Ah! how happy his family are when they think on him! You can best tell what

you feel in contrasting your conduct with his."

Augustine, in his impatience, had walked some way from the village to meet the boy who brought the letters. His hand trembled with joyful confidence as he broke the seal. He read the letter, and then stood like one stupified; his blood began to boil in his veins, and all his bad feelings seemed to rush into his heart again. "It is useless," he cried, "to attempt obedience to them," and he walked on rapidly, too disturbed to think, or to decide on any thing. He was at the gate of the parsonage garden before he felt that he was not in a state to speak with any human being. He turned away, leaped over the low railing that inclosed the churchyard; and rushed into the shade of the aged yew trees, where he knew he could remain unseen. While he stood there (leaning against the old trunk of one of the trees, and watching a snail as it crawled over a broken tombstone at his feet, listless as to what he thought or looked upon, the sound of approaching footsteps awoke his attention), he looked up, and saw Mr. Temple

with Charlotte leaning on his arm. They were passing along to the church, and a smiling little procession followed them. Then Augustine recollected that he had agreed with Charlotte to be present that very morning at the wedding of a young country maiden, justly esteemed in the village, and a great favourite at the rectory. He saw them pass along, and he had not the heart to join them. But Charlotte turned her head (as if in search of some one) and then spoke to her father. He heard her pronounce his name—he did not stop to think,—in another moment he was at her side, forgetting (while he looked in her face, and listened to her sweet voice) that he was, in his own opinion, the most miserable creature in the world. During the solemn marriage service he had time enough to recall all the bitterness of his feelings. It seemed a mockery to his wretchedness to be brought to the very altar, where he had once hoped to receive, from the same minister, the hand of her who stood beside him; and to know, at the same time, that impediments and perplexities, which he could scarcely hope to

see removed, stood between him and such happiness. And, Oh! how he hated his riches, as he looked on the bride and bridegroom, so happy in their poverty! Had he not felt that it would have been not only useless but ridiculous for him to do so, he would have implored Mr. Temple to unite him to Charlotte before they quitted the church.

At breakfast Augustine was *distract* and melancholy, and Mrs. Temple (who had been astonished at his cheerfulness for the two previous days) said very kindly, "You do not look yourself, dear Mr. Montague! Has any thing unpleasant occurred? I cannot help being anxious about you, for you know I consider you as my son." Augustine felt something rise in his throat, and choke him; he could not trust himself to speak. Mrs. Temple turned towards her husband and Charlotte for some explanation, but her alarm increased as she beheld the countenance of the former. He handed over a letter to Augustine, and said in a mild but sorrowful voice, "Can you explain to me the meaning of this?" What was the dismay of poor Au-

gustine to behold another letter in the same strain from his mother to Mr. Temple! unkind, nay, almost insulting,—begging to remind him of his duty as a parent and as a Christian; and desiring him not to detain Augustine another hour under his roof, but to use his influence and make him return instantly to his parents! With downcast eyes, and cheeks burning with shame, more like a culprit, than what he was in truth, an honest-hearted, high-principled young man, Augustine offered all the explanation that he could. He gave a circumstantial account of his own views, and of the way in which he had made them known to his parents; and mentioned the letter which he had also received from his mother that morning “Alas!” he said, as he concluded, “I fear I am to blame for being so very sanguine. My letter was, I now see, ill-timed; and I (who love you all with an affection which can never change) have been the means of adding to the trials you are called upon to bear.” Augustine could say no more; he covered his face with his hands and sobbed aloud.

“Do not make yourself miserable about us, my dear young friend !” said Mr. Temple, with his usual mild voice, when he found that Augustine was able to hear him. “That letter does not disturb me. I feel more for you, and for the writer of it, than for myself ; for I am (blessed be God !) conscious of upright intentions. Your mother does not know us—she does not know my Charlotte ; and designing persons are now so often met with, that I am not very much astonished at her suspicions. You will prove to her by your conduct how unfounded those suspicions are, and that your residence in this family have rendered you not a less affectionate or a less obedient child than you have ever been.”

“You would not have me,” said Augustine, “forget that respect which I owe, not only to you, but to myself ?”

“Indeed I would not ; but I would have you at the same time remember, that one of the most revolting characters is an undutiful child. We may have many brethren, many children, nay, more than one wife, but we can have only one mother. Whenever it is

consistent with a still higher duty to be obedient to an earthly parent, we should cheerfully obey.

“But in this instance!” said Augustine.

“In this instance,” interrupted Mr. Temple, “you can obey; at least you can obey one command—to leave us this very day, and meet your parents in London.”

“And leave you in your distress?”

“Nay, do not speak so slightly of our faith, or of our God,” exclaimed Charlotte, meekly. “The one will never fail us while we look stedfastly to the other. They are privileged children whom their Heavenly Father chasteneth, ‘though no chastening for the present seemeth joyous.’ Do follow my father’s advice; and remember, that while you hesitate, you tacitly admit that the suspicions which have been awakened against us are true. Your own conduct towards your parents may alter their opinion very greatly of mine. I am sure you will do what is right! You will seek the spirit of wisdom and sound judgment! You will not suffer yourself to be guided by your own inclination.”

Charlotte spoke with that distinct but soft enunciation, at times so peculiar to her, which gave an interest to the most trifling words she uttered ; but as she finished speaking, and met the full ardent gaze of Augustine, a blush of the richest crimson dyed her modest face.

“ And you would have me discard my dearest earthly hopes !” said he, his voice trembling, and almost failing with agitation, as he spoke. “ You would also forbid me to think of Charlotte ! You would also wish me to forget her !”

“ I will not reply to these assertions,” said Mr. Temple. “ Charlotte can answer them as she wishes. She is unrestrained, and free to decide for herself,” continued her father, and his look and his smile were indeed gratifying to his child.

Again the rich blush spread over her face ; but she disregarded her own confusion, and met the gaze of Augustine with a sweet and modest smile, which gave its graces to her words. “ I confess, freely confess, that I love you ; but, without any prudery, I utterly disclaim all pretensions to that wild and in-

fatuated passion which novel writers, and *some* others (she looked very archly at Augustine, as if to remind him whom she meant) dignify with the sacred name of love. I cannot promise you," she added, playfully, "to die or lose my senses, should our love be crossed; but I can promise you, I trust I can, never to doubt you even in thought—to be faithful in absence—to think of you, and pray for you without ceasing; and to look forward with anxious hope to the time when I may become the partner of your every joy and sorrow. And now (having made this bold confession) let me turn it to some good account. Let me beseech you, by the claims which you have given me to your love, to pray that you may see clearly your plain straight-forward duty to God; and that you may not only see, but consider and perform it, notwithstanding every difficulty and temptation in your way."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE meeting between Augustine and his parents was constrained on his part; and poor Lady Montague, as usual, was very injudicious in her manner of treating her son. Sir George was really glad to see him, and appeared to have forgotten that there had been any difference between them. He would fain have turned the conversation, at least for that first evening, to indifferent subjects; but Lady Montague forgot all the fatigues of her long journey, and adhered most pertinaciously to her own opinion, 'that Augustine ought to understand her—nay, that he should!' Augustine, also, had no wish to avoid the subject, which weighed so heavily at his heart; and he willingly listened and replied to his mother. But Lady Montague little knew the difficulties of the task she had undertaken. Her son had come back an altered being. He had learnt humility, and wisdom, and experience. She found

no longer a yielding child, without even an opinion of his own; or a sullen, self-conceited lad, whose arguments it was easy to overthrow, and whose insolence it afforded her satisfaction to meet, with all the bitterness she could command. She scarcely knew why, but she now found herself unable to answer, much less to convince, as she conversed with Augustine. But Sir George, who was a cool and silent spectator, could not help confessing to himself that there was much sense in all that Augustine said; and that his manner towards his mother was as distinguished by gentle and respectful mildness, as by modest but unshaken firmness. All her reproachful invectives he bore with great sweetness of temper; but when she repeated her commands, that he should entirely renounce all intercourse with the Temples, she found him inflexible.

I know that I have touched upon a subject in which it is vain to attempt to please many of my readers. There are so many dogmatical parents, who will not tolerate a shadow of difference in opinion, as to mar-

riage ! and there are so many young persons who deem themselves victims to parental tyranny, and look upon the meanest deceit, the most persevering opposition, as not only excusable, but laudable, where a lover is concerned, that I think it likely my book will be flung down by the one party as dangerous, and by the other as heretical ! But I would bid parents and children both look, not to their common opinions, but to their common sense ; not to their own blinded will, but to the will of God, as declared in the holy Bible.

Augustine had determined within himself to defer for some little time any attempt to influence his parents in favour of his attachment to Charlotte Temple ; but on one point of dispute between them he knew there must be no delay. He had heard his mother speak of her hopes that Mr. Tarver would be the successful candidate for the living of Westerton ; and he had contented himself with saying, “ that though he was sorry to oppose her wishes, he should call on his grandmother to recommend Mr. Temple.”

“ And what on earth,” she said, “ can in-

duce you to set yourself against that admirable young man?" (Augustine bit his lips as she pronounced the word *admirable*.) "Your friend! your own college friend, too! and one who never led you into wickedness, like the rest."

"I assure you," replied Augustine, calmly, "that I have no wish to injure Mr. Tarver (who, however, is not my friend); and the reason why I hope he will not succeed with Lady Elizabeth is simply this: that he is not to be named with Mr. Temple!"

Augustine felt less scruple to oppose Mr. Tarver, as that gentleman had lately espoused a widow lady, many years older than himself, and had come into the possession of her large income. This lady was the very Mrs. Hunter Bond, with whom my readers are already acquainted, who, by the sudden death of a relation, with whom she had lived in that capacity which is vulgarly termed "toad-eater," had inherited the whole fortune of the generous dupe. Finding it not only fashionable but at last convenient, to assume the title of a saint, she had become a

follower of popular preachers. From frequenting a little stifling chapel of ease in the vicinity of Bermondsey, where Mr. Tarver collected crowds of those persons who have been so well described by St. Paul*, "They will not endure sound doctrine, having itching ears," her splendid equipage was observed to wait, long after the congregation had dispersed, at the vestry-door, till the portly preacher allowed her to convey him to his lodgings. At length she, who had shown herself such an adept in flattery, became the dupe of grosser flatteries than she had ever offered; and consented to believe that she made him, as her husband, the happiest of mankind.

The morning after his arrival in London, Augustine called on Lady Elizabeth Montague. The old lady now lived quite secluded from the world, and seldom consented to see even her own relations. Yet she exacted from them the most particular attentions. When Augustine was quite a child, he had been the especial favourite of the old

* 2 Tim. ch. 4, v. 3.

lady ; and, notwithstanding the accounts which she had heard of his dissolute manners, she alone had told his parents ‘ that he was not the only person to be blamed.’

Lady Elizabeth had many prejudices in favour of noble birth, and her daughter-in-law (knowing this, and fearing the influence of Augustine) had written to the old lady from Cheltenham, not only to recommend Mr. Tarver; but to inform her, that her grandson was very anxious to degrade his family by a very low connexion. Lady Montague had some idea in her own mind that she had seen Mr. Temple in her early life, when Lady Elizabeth might have deemed Sir George’s marriage with herself ‘ a low connexion.’ She was not very anxious to be recognised by Mr. Temple.

Lady Elizabeth Montague resided in a large house in Burlington Gardens. As Augustine approached the door, it opened, and a gentleman in black came out. He recognised Mr. Tarver in the well-fed, portly personage who descended the steps, smiling most graciously

as he turned his head and spoke to the tall gaunt porter at the door. Mr. Tarver began to draw off his glove the instant his eye caught the figure of Augustine; but Augustine noticed not his extended hand, and passed him quickly, with a very distant bow.

"My lady will not see any one this morning, sir," replied the porter, when Augustine had announced himself.

"Will she not?" said Augustine. "Why was that gentleman admitted, then, whom I have just passed?"

"He was admitted to write a note, but he did not see my lady."

"But tell your mistress I am here, and wish to see her. You seem to have forgotten who I am."

"Oh! no, I haven't, master Augustine," said the old man. "I'll go and bid them tell my lady; but I fear she will refuse to see even you."

Soon after the old housekeeper came down into the hall, followed by the porter; and she made a low curtsy to Augustine, and looked

very prim, and said very little; but that little signified a decided refusal on the part of Lady Elizabeth to see her grandson.

"But what is the reason? Is she ill?"

"My lady is not very well."

Augustine did not stop to reply; but passing them both, he sprang lightly up the stairs, and stood at the door of Lady Elizabeth's dressing-room before the aged pair below had recovered from their dismay and astonishment. He knocked very gently at the door. "Come in!" exclaimed the old lady. He obeyed. Lady Elizabeth was a slender old lady, rather above the middle height, with a peculiarly clear, pale complexion, and soft, benevolent blue eyes. She was remarkably gentle and feminine in her manners, though eccentric in her ways of thinking and acting.

"How is this?" she cried, rising from her seat with much calm dignity. "I desired not to be disturbed."

The little dog, which lay at his mistress' feet, had sprung up the instant Augustine entered the room; and discovering an old acquaintance, he leaped about Augustine, ex-

pressing his delight in many playful ways, and springing up to kiss his hand.

“Down, sir, down,” he said, caressing the little dog: then, looking Lady Elizabeth steadily in the face, and still holding the lock of the door in his hand, he said; “Is my presence really a disturbance? Do you, for the first time, command me to leave you? If you do, madam, I will go instantly.”

“No,” she replied, evidently pleased by his respectful manner. “Come, and sit down near me;” she held out her hand as she spoke. “You were wont to ask my blessing, dear child!” she said, and immediately her grandson came forward, and knelt down before her. She blessed him, placing her hands upon his head; and then passing her hand again lightly and fondly over his hair, she said, “I am a strange, fanciful old woman, and I ought to think more seriously, before I refuse to see my only grandchild. I gave you but a sorry welcome, my dear child! Even that little dog would have taught me better. But sit down, and explain to me why, in the first place, you were so determined to see me.”

“I wish,” he replied, “to receive from your own lips, a reply to the letter I sent you.”

“Letter! when? what letter?” and she looked astonished.

Augustine explained how that he had begged his mother to forward his letter to her.

“Go on,” she said, quietly.

And Augustine proceeded to explain to her the purport of his letter; and then, by degrees, she drew from him a full account of his stay at Thursley; and she made him describe the characters, the manner of living, even the persons of Mr. and Mrs. Temple, and their daughter Charlotte.

“And now tell me,” she said, when Augustine had ceased speaking, “why would you have me give this living, which is at my disposal, rather to Mr. Temple than to the gentleman who made the first application for it? Can you offer any reason, why Mr. Tarver is less worthy to possess the living than he?”

The temptation was great to Augustine,

but indignantly he spurned it. "I wish to offer no reason, my dear madam: you have doubtless heard Mr. Tarver extolled by his friends, or followers; and you know all that I can tell you about Mr. Temple. I will not presume to put forward my opinion. The decision is entirely with you. You well know which *you* think the most deserving; and I am sure you will decide accordingly."

Lady Elizabeth sat without speaking for some minutes; and then she asked a few more questions about Mrs. Temple particularly; while she was doing so, she walked to the farther end of the room, and took from a table a small golden case. "Does Mrs. Temple bear any resemblance to this miniature?" she said, putting the little picture into his hand.

"It is a little like Mrs. Temple; but it is very like her daughter:" and then he recollected, that it was her resemblance to this little miniature (which he had often loved to gaze on when a child) that had made him imagine that Charlotte's countenance was not unknown to him.

"I cannot be mistaken," said the old lady;

“your Mrs. Temple was a dear friend of mine many years ago; and that is her portrait. Her maiden name was Eardley.”

“I do not remember to have heard her maiden name; but I know that the two names of her son, my friend, were William Eardley.”

“And now, my child,” said Lady Elizabeth, “give me my writing-table.”

He placed it before her, and she took a packet of papers from the drawer, and selecting one of them, she wrote a few words upon it, and said to her grandson: “There, Augustine, take this, and enclose it in a letter to Mr. Temple, with my love to my dear friend, Juliana Eardley; but I forgot, you must mention *my maiden* name also, Elizabeth Vernon. You will find pens and paper in the library. Remember you do not return to me, unless I call for you, for a full hour. You can amuse yourself with the books; or perhaps you would like to write a long letter to your favourite Charlotte Temple; only remember not to send it till you have seen me again.”

Augustine had scarcely left the room, when

Sir George and Lady Montague were announced. "Let them come up immediately," said the old lady.

"Your visit is well timed, for I was about to send for you both," she said. "Sit down beside me, and give me your attention for a little time. I am about to ask a favour of you, my dear George, and of you also, my dear madam, but don't interrupt me—hear what I have to say first, before you make any remark, or ask any question—I beg to apologise for making such a request, but I am sure you will grant it. I am now getting very aged—I cannot expect to remain with you many years longer. I wish to see some prospect of my grandson's marriage; for I know he has been for the last few years a source of some uneasiness to you, as well as to myself. I am apt to think that an attachment to a discreet and pious maiden may be of great service to a young man. I have lately discovered a dear friend, whom I had lost sight of for many years. Though much younger than myself, we loved one another like sisters. She accompanied her aunt, Lady

M——, to some foreign court, when her uncle, Lord M——, was made minister there. I now find that she is the wife of a most excellent man, a clergyman, whose fortune is not large, little more than a living which is valued at a thousand pounds a-year. They have an only daughter, in person the exact resemblance of her mother, whose miniature you have often admired.—This is it.—Her uncommon loveliness of person is, however, her least recommendation. She is what the daughter of a pious minister of Christ ought to be.

“Do you think, if I were to ask my beloved friend, with her husband and their sweet daughter, to visit me at Hurstwood, that I could prevail on Augustine to come also? and might I depend on the promise of your agreeable society at the same time? And supposing this young lady should answer our expectations, and (which is not improbable!) engage the affections of our beloved Augustine, do you think there would be any objection to their union—at the expiration, we will say, of a year, as they are both but young at present?”

Sir George was about to reply, but finding that his lady, as usual, had determined to speak for him, he waited to hear her opinion. She had always stood in awe of Lady Elizabeth, and she was not a little pleased to receive such a proof of her confidence.

"I am sure," she cried, looking round to Sir George, with a smile which seemed to say, she was certain that his opinion coincided with her own, "I am sure both Sir George and myself cannot but highly approve this proposition of your Ladyship; and to tell you the truth I have, since I wrote to you, been more seriously alarmed than ever, lest Augustine should disappoint all our expectations by forming that low connexion, about which I communicated to you my fears. He arrived in town last night, and appears inflexibly bent on following his own wicked and perverse inclinations."

"I have seen him this morning," replied Lady Elizabeth, "and I have spoken to him about the connexion to which you allude; and I am happy to say, that I found him more reasonable than I could have supposed. I showed him that miniature, which he used to

admire when quite a boy; and he seemed to agree with me, that it was the sweetest countenance he had ever seen. I did not find it very difficult to make him believe, that the original might be all that a husband could desire.—But Augustine is in the next room, writing: will you be so kind, my dear George, as to call him hither?"

The young man entered with the letters in his hand; and Lady Elizabeth gazed on him, and then on his parents—and when she saw the cold estranged looks of those whom she loved best on earth, all her self-possession forsook her: a deep sigh seemed to rise from the very depths of her heart, and she wept with uncontrollable grief. When the burst of her weeping was over, she said, with a look and voice which were extremely affecting to her children, "I will tell you what affects me thus. The thought came across my heart, and pierced like a knife, that I may perhaps die, and never see you bound together by that strong, nay, that natural affection, which should unite you! that on my death-bed I may lie and weep over this estrangement;

and depart without the blessed assurance that the parent and the child of my own blood were at peace together ! But, no ! this will not be—you will not let it be,” she said, smiling through her tears. “Another hour will not pass before I see my Augustine restored to the confidence of his beloved parents. And now, let me explain myself.—Forgive me, my dear madam !” and she took the hand of Lady Montague, and addressed her with real courteousness ; “and forgive me, also, my dear George ! for having practised what, I fear, is a species of fraud upon you both. That miniature, the portrait of my early friend, Miss Eardley, is also the portrait of Mrs. Temple. To her husband I have presented the living of Westerton, which is valued at a thousand a-year.—And now, will you prove that you forgive me, by accepting at once my invitation to Hurstwood, and by allowing me to introduce to you there, not only Mrs. Temple, but her daughter Charlotte ?”

L'ENVOY.

THIS question is put to me, "What has induced you to write this little volume? Don't you know that it will be classed with religious novels, and you have often heard the objections raised against such works?"—

Because I am a very independent sort of personage, and choose to have an opinion of my own, and to write as I please. I know that a cry has been raised (and with some justice) against religious novels; but do you remember what Cowper says: "I might have preached more sermons than even Tillotson did, and better, and the world would have been still fast asleep; but a volume of verse is a fiddle that puts the universe in motion." Now every one knows that so many such fiddles have been played by very different persons from Cowper, that the universe is apt to fall asleep over a volume of verse. But still, I fear, Tillotson's sermons continue unread.

Hear what I have to say for myself. In the first place, I will not allow this story of mine to be a religious novel. It is a common narrative of common facts; and I believe that the instruction conveyed by it may be of more use in a narrative, than in any other form. Essays and sermons might not be opened, but even idlers will read a story. However violent a cry may be raised against religious instruction in the form of a narrative, I must appeal to Our Lord himself as my example. It pleased Him, "who spake as never man spake," often to deliver instruction in some simple yet striking narrative; and doubtless many an idler lingered to hear Him, even till he hung upon His words, who would have passed heedless by had not a story been narrated to him.

When the forms and hues of an object are visible, distinct, and familiar, memory imprints them with ease upon her tablets. Had Nathan come to David with a long and solemn rebuke, the monarch might have trembled, as Felix trembled before Paul; but when the prophet told the story of the poor man and

his little ewe lamb, the facts stood out distinctly, and Nathan had only to add, "Thou art the man." Conviction flashed full upon David; he exclaimed at once, "I have sinned against the Lord." Yet I verily believe if the story of the Prodigal Son had been published at the present day, it would have been called a religious novel.

But now to descend to myself—I must say, that I do not expect to "set the universe in motion." I do not care to shine as an author by moving incidents, or fine language. I have a higher aim, though a humbler manner. I write to the common sense of my readers. I am in earnest, and wish to be perfectly natural in my story and in my style. Far be it from me to attempt to lower the tone of the religion of the gospel: yet I must say that I am heartily sick of the narrow minds and the weak heads I meet with. I am sick of their ignorance, their unkind prejudices, their display, their insufferable cant. When they have discovered "the pearl of great price," they treat it as the cock in the fable treated the jewel which he found. Far be it from me

also, to join with that cold-hearted and formal party whose religion is neither to be found in the Bible, nor in their own hearts; who are always ready to condemn the opinions and the conduct of all who do not think and act as themselves; who lavish their senseless abuse on many of the wisest and best of mankind. With them, all pious persons are Methodists or Calvinists, and the very mention of the Bible Society, or any other religious society, is offensive. I cannot endure that every difference should instantly be made the watchword of a party. We need to be reminded, "Sirs, ye are brethren." I have often wished that the two parties could know the contempt with which their pitiable differences are regarded by men of talent who have no religion. They might then see the good sense and the good policy of agreeing, wherever it is possible to agree, rather than to cast a discredit on the faith they profess. Who, that saw the virulence, the spirit of persecution on each side, would believe that we professed to serve the same God and Saviour; that we read the same Scriptures;

that we were alive to the same hopes and fears ! When will those blessed times come in which a difference in any religious point will cease to be almost the bitterest source of dislike ?

In the story you have been reading, I have attempted to show how it is that the children of many persons who are deemed saints, turn out sinners. But this is not always the case ; for a careless or timid spirit in a parent may also prove the ruin of his children. There is many an Eli now, even among the priests of the Lord, who, notwithstanding his own personal holiness, will have to answer, for his criminal indulgence and forbearance towards his children, to the living God.

I think, however, that some of my readers will be convinced that I have not drawn from my own imagination, but from the life. There are too many Lady Montagues now living, and too many Augustines ! and I shall indeed be rewarded if to any such my experience should prove beneficial. I wish to show, how cruel it is to send a young person forth into the world without preparing him

for its deceits and dangers! how cruel it is not to educate him for his pilgrimage through the world! not to warn him, as St. Paul does the Corinthians *, that he cannot entirely forsake the company of the vain and the wicked (for to escape them we must needs go out of the world)! He should be taught rather to “use the world as not abusing it;” to regard it as a state of trial and warfare, not as a home, which he may love—where he may rest.

“And do I not think an university a very dangerous place?” you may now say. Indeed, I do not. I would send a young man thither: ’tis a fine stage for the trial of his principles. They must be tried, and they will scarcely fail, if he has been taught to put on the whole armour of God, and not merely to *talk about it*. There is an age of innocence and an age of principle. Let a young man be told in a plain and serious manner of the temptations which await him in the world. Do not leave him to find them for the first time, when their very novelty will make them charming. Talk

* 1 Cor. 5.

to him on subjects, which you would not even mention were it not to warn him. And never forget to guard him against trusting to his own strength, but point out to him that his real strength lies in watchfulness and prayer.

Again, though I mean to say that we are not to make a display and a boast of our religion, yet we should always remember that we hold a high profession (we cannot hold a higher) when we call ourselves Christians.—It is to be lamented that there are so many false professors among the really pious; but the fact is not less true than *natural*, that when any religious society is formed—when any work of piety is to be performed—we shall always find, not only the best and holiest of our brethren engaged there, but those whose religion is all talk and display. That very nature, those very qualities, which will be sure to injure the good cause to which they join themselves—urge them to be first and foremost in it. Do you not know that where the corn grows, the tares will be found also?

THE END.

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